WHAT'S HOLDING UP THE SECOND FRONT? See Page Four

NEW MASSES

July 21, 1942 15c in Canada 20c

THE V-COUNTRIES ARE READY

by Anatol Huss

THE AIMS OF HITLER'S OFFENSIVE

by Colonel T.

SPEED: SLOGAN FOR BRITAIN

A Cable by Claude Cockburn

PETROV'S LAST DISPATCH

And appreciations by Margaret Bourke-White and Samuel Sillen

In this issue: *Ruth McKenney, Blaine Owen, Bruce Minton, Elliott Grennard*

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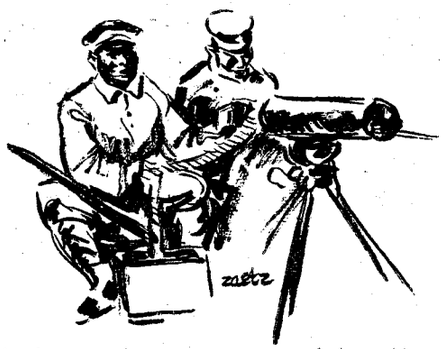
BETWEEN OURSELVES

IF YOU have an acquaintance who has to be *shown* that people in general are eagerly, impatiently wanting a Western Front, just bring him to these offices. We can put before him a stack of letters and telegrams that outdo any poll of public opinion. They have to do with our special Western Front issue—which was published, remember, nearly two months ago. Many of the letters came within the past two weeks. There was a telegram, from a group of women in a New York social service agency, dated July 9: "In view of recent Anglo-Soviet-American pacts, urge you publish another of your excellent articles on immediacy for second front." That one asked only for "another article"—a modest request. Most of the letters want another issue of the magazine! In fact, that's the point of most the praise: "Do it again."

Which isn't hard to understand. As soon as the Western Front issue appeared, we got the sort of response that overwhelmingly convinced us that practically no other subject in America was so absorbing as this one. Well, it is even more absorbing now, and becomes more urgent every day. As we said at that time, we had no idea of trying to dispose of the topic with that one issue—we would continue to publish articles and editorials about it. In this issue you will find a five-page section on the subject. There will be others, regularly. However, the basic arguments for the Western Front, the technical data, the opinions of experts—all these things as given in our special issue are good today and the May 26 issue is still a useful handbook on the subject. To put out another whole magazine devoted to a second front would only mean repeating the material in the first. Our articles and editorials are meant to keep up with world developments as they relate to the opening of the Western Front. So: thanks for the praise and we ardently appreciate your interest in the subject—please write us again, tell us what you are thinking and doing about a second front. And tell us what you think of our "continuations" to the special issue—there will be many of those, even if we can't promise a whole magazineful of them at one time.

A FRIEND of ours has a recipe for bearing up under the July heat: he says, "Just think if you had been in the Union Army in the Civil War, marching across blazing plains, in a woolen uniform and carrying a rifle and a knapsack weighing heaven knows what. If they could stand *that*. . . ." And he feels like a tomato in the icebox by contrast. You can try it if you like—we did, and nearly fainted from the weight of the rifle. The truth is, we've decided not to try *any* remedies this summer. Heat has become a minor irritation in the world of today, and the headlines aren't waiting on cool weather. There used to be a slowing down of activity about the middle of **June, but** it seems to us that people are as active now as they were in April or May. There are war relief parties, rallies, street corner meetings—and we can't see that the attendance is suffering just because home is a more comfortable place than a crowded hall. Of course as many of these things as possible are held in the open air, though if that happens to be impossible nobody complains. People don't even stop working on vacations these days, to judge from the reports we hear and from our mail. At the very least they knit. Some of them organize forums, or otherwise take a healthy interest in the community life of whatever place they find themselves. Since a thirty-two page weekly magazine requires the same amount of attention in July as in December, summer has never made much difference to this staff. However, that's by no means why we regard all this public activity with pleasure. It just seems to us that the people themselves enjoy it more than the old moping around. They're alert, they're determined, and they know they're going where they're going.



One of the open-air affairs that we especially recommend takes place this weekend: the Victory Fiesta, given by the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, which has done splendid work in aiding the victims of Franco to make their way to America. There will be two dance bands, American and Spanish, with entertainment by Zero Mostel, Anita Sevilla, Marc Blitzstein, Joshua White, Harold Rome, and the Almanac Singers—besides games and refreshments. There will also be serious political discussion, under the slogan "July, 1936—Republican Spain Opens World Fight Against Fascism; 1942—United for Victory." The fiesta will be held at Dexter Park, Jamaica, L. I., Sunday, July 19, from 10 AM to 1 AM. Editors of NM plan to be there, as well as many of our contributors; we hope to see you.

The story by Eugene Petrov on page 19 of this issue, came to us through Inter-Continent News Service.

In response to numerous inquiries: the photograph of children at play which constituted our front cover for the June 16 issue, and also illustrated Will Rivers' article, "The Kids Say," was taken by Morris Huberland, a manual worker who does photography in his spare time.

Who's Who

ANATOL HUSS is the pseudonym of an attache of one of the governments in exile. . . . Blaine Owen is a free lance writer who fought in Spain. . . . Margaret Bourke-White was in the USSR at the time of the Nazi invasion. She is the author of the recently published *Shooting the Russian War*. Helen Clare Nelson, Charles Humboldt, and Elliott Grennard have contributed frequent critical articles and reviews to NM.

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WHAT'S HOLDING UP

THE whole world is watching the bloody valley of the Don, the rolling Cossack countryside made famous in Sholokhov's novel. Here is where Hitler is hurling his millions of men, the tanks and airplanes of a winter and spring's preparation, in the desperate effort to smash Timoshenko's armies, to cut across the plains of the northern Caucasus, to reach the Caspian Sea.

And that is just the trouble. The whole world is watching, but not much more.

"IN RUSSIA, in Egypt, in China," said the *Wall Street Journal* last week, "the Axis has broken the Allied defense strategy, and approaches thumping 1942 successes which would blot out the hopes of victory . . . . in 1944."

In these words lies the crux of the great world crisis that confronts us.

"The Axis has broken the Allied defense strategy" . . . why? Because it was a strategy of defense, this so-called strategy we have been pursuing for the last twelve months. It was a strategy of underestimating our allies. It was a strategy of mending colonial fences instead of tending to the central and decisive theaters of the struggle. It was a strategy of retreat where struggle-to-the-death should have been the password. It was, in fact, no strategy at all.

"The Axis approaches thumping 1942 successes," says the *Wall Street Journal,* "which would blot out our hopes of victory—in 1944." What a grim and horrible irony this is, that our side—which could be victorious in 1942, could go into the new year without Hitlerism and Hitler's war—should now be faced . . . with what? Victory next year? Oh, no. Victory the year after? No, not even that. The *Wall Street Journal's* editor confesses that this strategy of defense implies a long, indeterminate struggle, five years, eight years, into a dim and distant future.

THE fact of the matter is that our enemies are still so powerful that no one nation among the United Nations can expect to win this war by itself. If the Soviet Union, which was the best prepared of all the United Nations, with a steadfast population that understood and was ready for total war, has not been able to stop the Axis by itself, then neither China, nor Britain, nor the United States will be able to do so. It was for this reason that an alliance of nations came into being. It was because we need our allies just as much as they need us. It was because only our combined efforts could save us all.

The second front, the strategy of two-front war, is therefore not an academic theory, an intellectual trinket, a chess device of idle minds. *It is the only strategy that a coalition of nations can pursue, for it is the only strategy that conforms to the existence of a coalition.* Failure to pursue this strategy—and to act upon it in time—means ultimately to nullify and break up the coalition. It means to allow the Axis to defeat us one by one, as they have been doing for these ten long, miserable years.

It is not as though those who still argue against a second front have an alternative strategy. No matter how powerful the United States may be a year from now or two years from now, that power will be worthless unless we can exercise it against the bastille of the Axis itself. That bastille cannot be taken unless British and American power is exerted in conjunction with our allies, and from the bases that our allies give us.

Without China and India we cannot defeat Japan. She will meet our bombers in mid-ocean the minute she can turn away from the mainland of Asia. She will bomb our bases, our factories on our own shores.

Without Russia we can never defend the Near East; without the Near East India is lost. And without Russia the Royal Air Force, which is today able to roam the skies of western Europe, will find that the Luftwaffe will challenge it in the air, challenge it on the airfields of Britain itself.

Without Russia, China, and Britain, all the power that America can mobilize will make us that much more of a prize for the Axis to concentrate upon, and to loot. We should be left to face a hostile world alone, the strategic keys of which would be in enemy hands.

And the oppressed peoples of the world would remember with bitterness the vast opportunities that were lost in the year 1942. America would be remembered as a country that was big but not great, in Dorothy Thompson's phrase.

We know it's not easy for Americans to visualize themselves fighting alone. The landing of a dozen spies on our coasts, the occupation of some fog-bound islands off Alaska—that seems trivial and faraway. But these are mere tokens of what would confront us if, in default of collective action to defeat the aggressors, we permitted the Axis to win impregnable positions in central Asia. The Caucasus and Caspian seem far away. But that is where the fulcrum of American security lies. *That is where the issue of a free world or a slave world teeters in the balance.*

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THAT WESTERN FRONT?

THE delay in opening a second front not only gives Hitler the chance of thrusting deeper into Russia, visiting new trials on a people who have already suffered beyond our understanding, but it tempts Japan to loose its attack on Russia in Asia, a vital area of America's defense. The delay in the second front not only perplexes our Russian friends, causes suspicions and anxieties in China, bewilders the gallant guerrillas from St. Nazaire to the hills of Montenegro, but actually, if this delay continues, it will only demoralize the British people, and America as well.

When the head of the House Military Affairs committee, Andrew May of Kentucky, makes the preposterous claim to secret information that the war's just about over, and therefore the country can relax, it demoralizes the nation only because the second front is being delayed.

When that breathless pipsqueak Kaltenborn, hero of so many wordy battles, tells us that we can't open a second front because Libya was lost, when the whole world realizes that the loss of Libya was due precisely to the delay in opening a second front, this serves to demoralize his listeners because they do not yet see the reality of a second front.

When Brig. Gen. G. K. Bourne of the British military staff in Washington makes a speech, as he did last week to the Institute of Public Affairs in Virginia, and mumbles about air power someday, somewhere defeating the enemy, and even talks about concentrating on Japan first, he generates more suspicion and antagonism to Great Britain in this country than all the reports about parliamentary crises in London. It is the delay in opening a second front which gives this brass hat his opening.

Even Quentin Reynolds has been put to use by the fifth column. In this week's *Collier's* Mr. Reynolds radios his "second thoughts on a second front." Actually these are not second thoughts, they are *second-hand* thoughts. They are a rehash of all the claptrap the British people have long ago rejected. Reynolds becomes the victim of a sinister gang of saboteurs, who are desperately striving to stymie the healthy and vigorous instinct of the British people for action, and are seeking thereby not only to betray Russia, but to overthrow the Churchill government for one that will seek a ha'penny peace with Hitler.

Mr. Reynolds says the second front is something new, hasn't been tried before. Yes, indeed, if it had been tried before the war wouldn't be in the crisis it is today.

Mr. Reynolds fears that the second front is risky. Lloyd's of London wouldn't issue an insurance policy on it. But there is no gilt-edged, seven percent, compound interest way of winning this war. There are only relative risks. Which risk would Reynolds have us take—the risks of a second front, for which Beaverbrook and Harriman say we are as prepared as we can be? or the risks of losing the war? Only the stars don't take risks, Mr. Reynolds. They also serve Hitler who only sit and wait.

And the fact that even Quentin Reynolds becomes the instrument of such talk is proof of how subtle and sinister the "no-actionaries" have become, doing their last desperate service to fascism by exploiting the second front delay.

NEW MASSES has no doubt that Mr. Roosevelt's and Mr. Churchill's agreement with Molotov will be fulfilled. It does not occur to us to doubt the promise of our Commander-in-Chief on the urgency of opening a second front in 1942. But the delay is providing a wedge for the enemies of our nation's interest; it can serve to demoralize our allies and ourselves.

Time is a treacherous ally who works for both sides, said Maxim Litvinov in February. Six weeks of this summer are left—that may be all that Hitler needs to alter the entire strategic picture, so that when a second front is finally opened, it will be riskier, more difficult, perhaps even less effective than it would be today.

OUR friends, the 300 Hungarian officers who were arrested last week for helping Serb, Slovak, and Russian guerrillas with arms—they are waiting. Our Chinese friends, for whom the *Ta Kung Pao* speaks when it called last week for a second front in Europe—they are waiting. Even Australia, with its face to the Pacific, calls for a second front now, in the words of the influential Sydney *Morning Herald.* Our Yugoslav allies, battling their way into Trieste—they are waiting to see America and Britain unfold their striking power.

This is no time for a war of nerves, or a war of words. Apart from tightening up in every phase of the war effort, we think the people must make their voices heard. NEW MASSES urges every reader and friend to join the CIO rally in Madison Square Park, 6 PM, Wednesday, July 22. Similar rallies are in order throughout the land.

"There is no punishment which that man does not deserve," says Tom Paine, "be he who, or what, or where he will, that may be the means of sacrificing a season so precious. . . ."

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SPEED—PASSWORD FOR BRITAIN

The grave news from the Soviet Union underscores the need of hastening every aspect of the war machine. Some weak spots in production.

London (by cable), July 10.

THE extreme gravity of the news from Russia rapidly wiped out the brief mood of relief, bordering on complacency, which followed the rally of the reorganized Eighth Army at El Alamein, and was itself a reaction from the state of opinion following the surrender of Tobruk. As a well known military commentator says this week, Hitler's plan "is now an open book for all to see." He points the analogy to Ludendorff's offensive of March 21, 1918, launched when the growing internal exhaustion of imperial Germany had already proved to the High Command that Germany must achieve overwhelming success in France before the winter, and above all before American power could make itself effectively felt on the battlefields.

With the different geographical setup, Hitler's problems are to this extent identical. And because of factors ranging from a shortage of industrial manpower during the winter to Timoshenko's preventive attack at Kharkov, this all-out offensive has started over three months later than Ludendorff's did in the crucial year. It is becoming sufficiently obvious that now, above all times, is the crucial essence of the contract whereunder Britain and the United States pledged a second front.

Every week Hitler is able to concentrate everything on the Eastern offensive is a week won back by him from the time he lost when the Red Army kept pinned on the Eastern Front the men he had hoped to switch into tank and plane production throughout the winter, the time he lost again when the RAF delayed supplies to Rommel across the Mediterranean for the southern prong of the eastward attack, the time he lost when the defenders of Sevastopol were fighting from ruins and from cellars, the time he lost when Timoshenko jumped in first at Kharkov.

He can only afford to have lost that time if he can be sure of getting it back again, so to speak, by the delay in opening that second front in Europe, which will turn the whole of his strategy upside down.

The mass of the British public, including the Army, is not merely eager for the opening of the second front, but feels confidence in the government's announcement of its intentions following Molotov's visit. The factors militating against the development at maximum speed of the organization of a second front are *of two kinds: the biggest is the failure*—wherever it may occur—of any section of the war apparatus to realize that at this stage of the war speed is everything. Here is an instance—I won't call it typical, but it is important and sufficiently characteristic of some of the existing weaknesses to be notable.

I REFER to what occurred on a particularly important war job in London. Under the essential works order certain skilled men were transferred to a similarly urgent job in a provincial city. It was understood from the Ministry of Labor and other government departments concerned that rates and conditions under which the transferred men would work would be the London rates and conditions and not these prevailing in the provincial city.

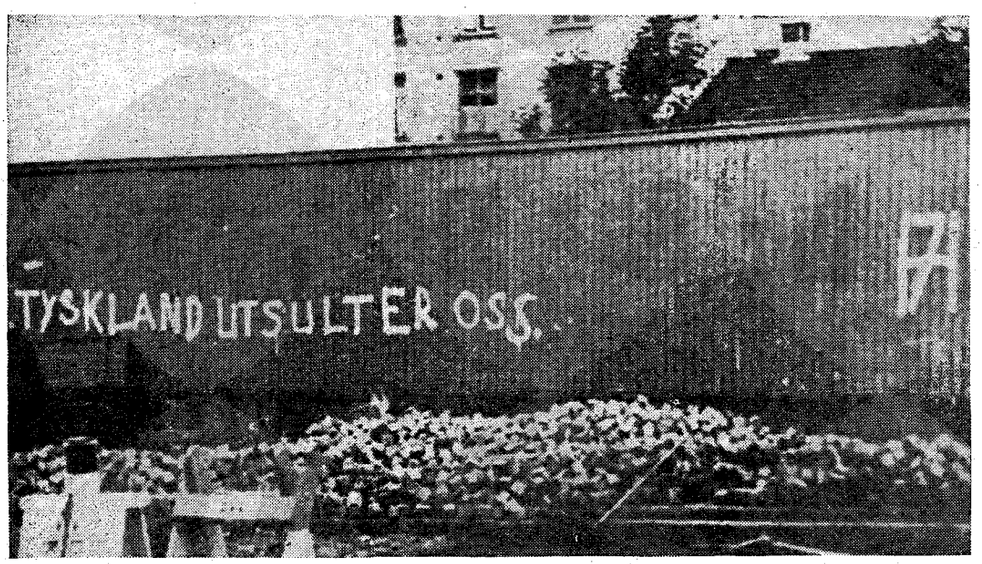
At the last moment, however, the employers association stepped in and informed the big firm in the provincial city which was to employ the men—and which had already agreed to pay the London rates—that the employers association disapproved of this agreement. The association insisted that the lower provincial rates be paid, apparently out of the fear of creating a "precedent" leading to a general up-grading of provincial rates. The transferred men accepted. But the men on the job in London, impatient of getting action through the union, decided after a stormy mass meeting that until a guarantee could be secured on rates and conditions for the men transferred from London, they would impose a ban on overtime working on the London job. That ban is still in existence and, daily, valuable hours are being lost.

And indeed, if it had not been for Communist influence, it is likely that there would have been not merely this overtime ban, but a strike action.

I quote this instance at length because it illuminates simply enough the sort of situation that has to be cleaned up quickly. It was obvious, for instance, that the men's demands are perfectly justified—as was acknowledged when the original agreement was made. It was obvious too that in this case the employers association was thinking and acting in terms of their postwar positions and profits, not of winning the war. On the other hand, it is perfectly plain that if the men themselves possessed a full, vivid realization of what the loss of hours on their sort of job really means at this crucial climax of the war, the ban on overtime couldn't possibly have been accepted as a suitable way to gain their point. Finally, it is clear that the government departments concerned would have insisted on exercising their full emergency powers and compelled the employers—as they already compel the workers—to accept payment at London rates.

I have said that the instance is not typical—which it is not—in the sense that action of this kind by the men is not typical. But the underlying situation which makes such incidents possible is typical of much of our industry. And it is a glaring example of the need for tightening up all over the industrial front.

In this process of tightening up and clarification of the issues at stake, the absence of the *Daily Worker* is keenly felt. It is one reason why the Amalgamated Engineering Union Conference has voted fifty to one for raising the ban on the paper, which they declared to be an indispensable asset in the war effort; why, this week, the Scottish District Conference of the Iron and Steel Association voted unanimously for lifting the ban; why there is already an assured majority of votes



"Germany Is Starving Us Out," says this "handwriting on the wall," somewhere in Norway.

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for lifting the ban lined up for the Trades Union Congress in September.

But September is a very long way off, and it is small wonder that according to the latest Gallup poll, there are now only twenty-nine percent of the entire population desirous of maintaining the ban any longer—this twenty-nine percent being largely composed of relatively well-to-do people without any direct knowledge of the situation in the factories and the effect the paper could have there.

As I reported in my cable last week, there were those who sought to use the defeats in Libya as a defeatist argument for delaying the second front, or even for repudiation of the agreement to open it. They received heavy defeat by both the House of Commons and public opinion—which realized from the Eighth Army's rally what determined men can do even with existing equipment.

Now some indications are to be seen of an attempt to use shipping losses for the same defeatist purpose. And also to try to play politics with this vital issue by actually attempting to use new cuts—serious privations, perhaps—which may be necessary on the food front and with other consumption goods, as an "argument" in favor of not using this shipping space for second front needs, but for keeping the ration position and general consumption position where it is at present.

It is deplorable that up to now the discussions of the shipping position have tended to concentrate on the question of whether or not the government should be less secretive about losses, and whether or not the shipping debate be public or secret. Obviously, if publicity can be given, it ought to be. And obviously, it is absurd to suppress the figures here, if the same figures are published in the United States. On the other hand, it is a fact that during the last war the secrecy observed by London did considerably trouble and fox the Germans. Chancellor Helfferich published an article in the German press in the summer of 1917 wherein he complained of the "statistical smokescreen" put up in London.

THERE are two other aspects of the problem much more seriously requiring examination and action. One is that which I have just touched on: namely, the question of whether available shipping space really is being allocated with an eye to one thing and one thing only—the needs of the organization and maintenance of the second front.

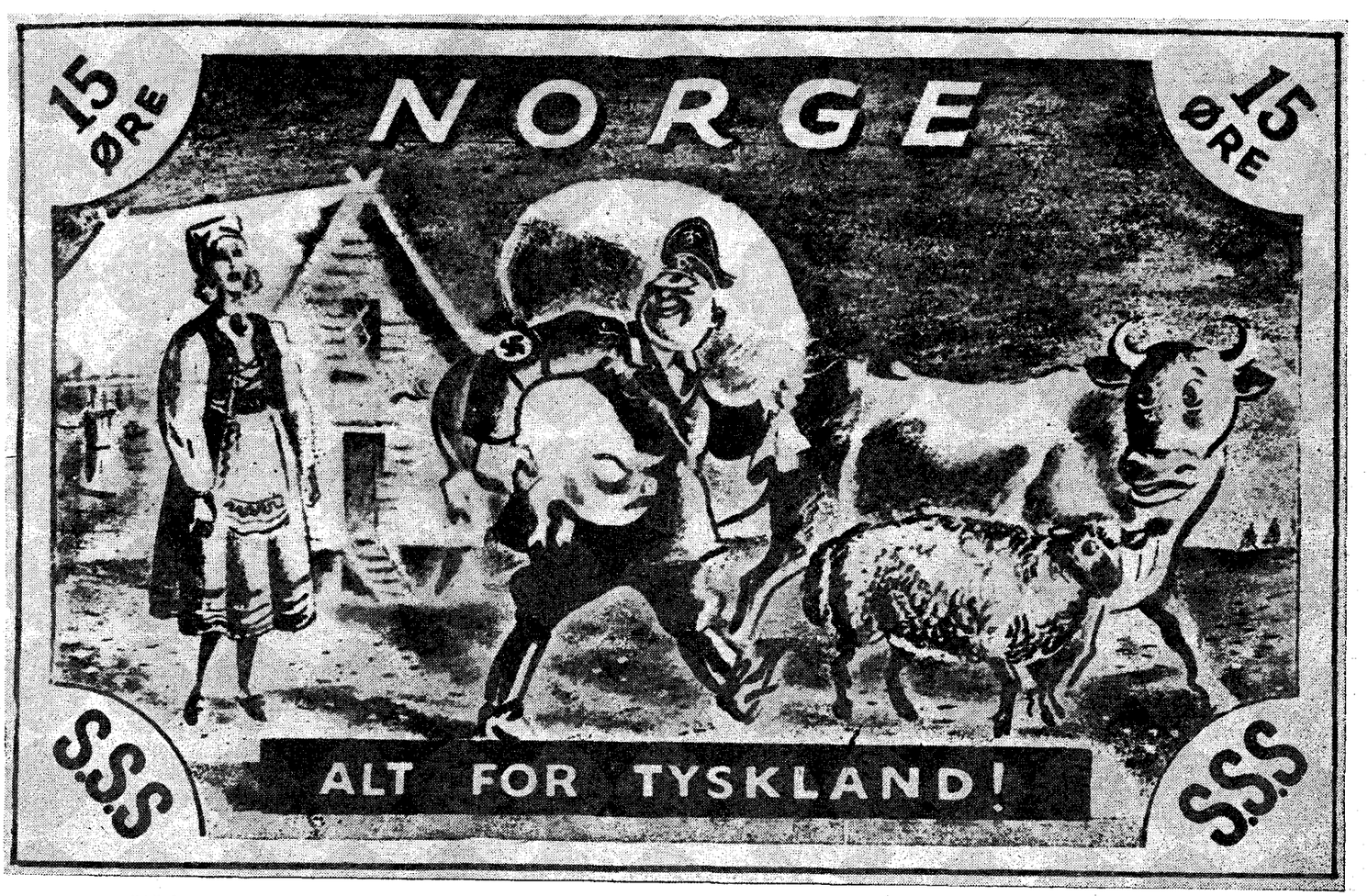
It would be monstrous if, at this stage, anyone should assert, or be induced to believe, that the British people will not gladly accept any new burden which the carrying out of this pledge may impose.

I do not know whether there is any serious hesitation on this issue. It is known that the Premier and the Food Minister are proud—with some justification—of the extent to which food difficulties have been tackled, and the present level of feeding in Britain. (The early period of the war was considerably worse in this respect than it is today.

It would be grotesque if this sort of satisfaction or nervousness about public reaction to further cuts were to delay for a moment the allocation of the last cubic foot of shipping space that can be spared for the second front needs. And clearly the cuts will have to be accompanied by a continuously more drastic action to clean up the Black Market and to extend facilities for communal feeding on a much larger scale than exists today, despite the general excellence and efficiency of the existing "British restaurants" organized by the Ministry of Food and the local authorities.

The other grave aspect of the problem concerns the question whether, from the design of ships to the last details of the work in building and repairing yards, every consideration is being subordinated to the need of outbuilding the sinkings. There have been repeated hints in the newspapers and rather more than hints elsewhere that big improvements in shipping design are still possible if all considerations of postwar profit and competitive trading were eliminated. Equally, there are innumerable suggestions put forward, for instance, at the recent conferences of the shop stewards of the shipbuilding and repair yards, many of which are either not adopted as yet or are being adopted with insufficient speed.

On all these points and many more in every field of our industry and military preparation, the news from Russia has induced a new sense of urgency.



"All for Germany," is the satiric title of stamps which the RAF is dropping over Norway. SSS means "The Swine Shall Be Slaughtered."

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IT'S A BLUFF, SAYS GOEBBELS

The Nazis know their whole war strategy will crumble on a second front. Their propaganda belittles the Molotov agreements in order to dishearten the guerrillas in the V-countries. How the Far East feels.

ONE of the most urgent aspects of the second front lies in its effect upon the unconquered peoples of Europe, as well as on China. The military-strategic aspects of the second front have been dealt with; Lord Beaverbrook's announcement that the British Army is fully equipped for invasion, and Averell Harriman's assurance that sufficient shipping facilities are available, leave the opponents of a second front no leg to stand on in respect to its feasibility.

From the *political-strategic* aspect, however, the second front is more urgent today than ever, as any one reading the news from Europe or from China will realize. Indeed, the risk of opening a front is small compared with the really fatal risk of not opening one.

If it is true that the crucial, decisive battle of the war is being fought now on the Eastern front—and all expert military opinions concur in that view—then not opening a second front now would mean not implementing the formal alliance of the United Nations. That is all that for the time being Hitler needs and wants. That is all that the appeasers and defeatists want. And in addition, there are those conservative minds that feed our country's enemies because, though they desire an Axis defeat, they are unable to free themselves from old habits and prejudices that help Hitler. Take, for example, the sudden discovery of the plight of China. Hanson Baldwin of the New York *Times* wrote the other day *that a Chinese Army no longer exists;* guerrilla bands are all there is. Thus the military "expert" disposed of the Chinese Army before the Japanese did. The picture to be conveyed is that of a China in such desperate straits that American attention and resources ought to be focused on the Far Eastern theater of war.

For argument's sake, let's take the nonsense at its face value for the moment. Even if there were such a thing as a free choice between effective succor of the Russian or the Chinese front (there isn't), is it to be America's world strategy to wait until the armies of an ally are no longer in existence, then to wake up to the emergency and try to do something about it?

The choice, of course, does not exist. The Chinese front and the Russian front are not separate in the sense (the only sense that matters strategically) that the British-American allies of both would have a free choice as to their respective urgency. The outcome of the *whole war,* in Europe and Asia, is being decided on the Russian front now. Besides rushing planes and pilots, China can be helped most effectively via Russia, and that is possible only after Hitler is crushed by opening a second front in the West. It is in this sense that the clear formulation of the Molotov-Roosevelt communique about the "urgent tasks of a second front in 1942" holds equally for the USSR and China, Britain, and America.

The impatience of the Chinese patriots and the danger of Chinese demoralization do not stem from the belief that Britain and America give strategic preference to the European instead of the Asiatic sector of the war, but from the passivity of the British and Americans in either direction, from a wait-and-see policy.

Not to open the second front in Europe now strengthens Japanese propaganda and the fifth column in China. Opening the second front in Europe now would mean to the informed and patriotic Chinese that the first indispensable, irrevocable, and decisive step was being taken for settling accounts with Japan. Not opening the second front in Europe now means to them the disconcerting perspective that the reckoning might be indefinitely postponed and Japan allowed time to consolidate her gains and settle down.

Thus, if Walter Lippmann (*Herald Tribune,* July 9), rightly reprimands the prophets of disaster for not taking into account, besides the machines of war, the spirit of resistance and the soul of man, he should have added that the only chance for Hitler and the Japanese fascists to kill that spirit of resistance is to demonstrate in hard military practice that while the unarmed peoples dare and do the impossible against overwhelming odds, their armed allies dare not do the possible against lesser odds.

Herein lies the gravest danger of all. It is not for nothing; it is shrewd political strategy dictated by pressing necessity when Goebbels and the whole German propaganda machine concentrate on telling the German people and the peoples of Europe that the British-American promise of a continental invasion this year is bluff. Goebbels is even able to "prove" his point—by simply quoting de Seversky.

THE Germany Army leadership dreads the prospect of a second front. Hitler is haunted by the fear of the increasing activity of European guerrillas and legions of civilian anti-Hitler saboteurs. But the fascist strategy of conquest is both military *and* political. The Axis' spectacular successes are due to the fact that they often ventured the seemingly impossible militarily because they deemed it possible politically. (Holland, Belgium, France, Norway, Denmark.) They weighed the fantastic military task of conquering Russia against its political feasibility—that is, against the possibility of isolating Russia from her allies—and attacked. Likewise, the Japanese oligarchy weighed the fantastic military task of conquering China against its political feasibility—that is, against the possibility of isolating China from her allies—and attacked.

Winston Churchill has rightly called the German onslaught on the USSR Hitler's "fatal miscalculation." But only a second front in Europe can clinch the point. For if there is no second front in Europe this year, Hitler's miscalculation was not fatal.

The same unity of military and political strategy tells the Hitlerites now that the main, deadly danger of a continental invasion is its support by, and merging with, the European movements of resistance. Hitler cannot cope with that movement of resistance if supported by a British-American army. Hitler cannot cope with a British-American invasion of the Continent, supported by the European movement of resistance. He would have a chance against both, were he not fully engaged in the East. The time of a continental invasion is now. Its goal and its chance are not simply "to divert forces from Russia," "to relieve Russia," "to prolong Russian resistance," "to keep the Red Armies in the field" (the very expressions suggest a limited and one-sided military viewpoint at best), but *to defeat Hitler.*

FROM the standpoint of a strategy able to blend military and political considerations, the opportunity to overthrow and stamp out Hitler by a continental invasion was never so favorable as now. And this historic opportunity will not recur. In this essential sense time is by no means on the side of the Allies, but on the side of Hitler. A continental invasion must, in order

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to succeed, coincide and merge with a European anti-Hitler uprising—and the favorable constellation of circumstances for such a unified European uprising is not something to be conjured up at any odd time by a magic wand. On the contrary. The Allied continental invasion must be timed in accordance with those favorable circumstances; not simply and naively hoping that sometime, somewhere, somehow a European uprising will occur when and if the Allies invade the Continent. To put it bluntly: if the Bulgarian, Albanian, Yugoslav, or Greek guerrillas were such wishful simpletons as all that, they would not be able to score those telling and signal successes against the Axis which they are scoring right now.

A United Press dispatch (July 8) tells of officers in the Hungarian army who were court martialed for having smuggled arms to the guerrilla bands of Gen. Draji Mihailovich. A release from the Office of War Information (July 9) tells of Balkan guerrillas invading Italian territory and pushing into Trieste. ". . . the broadcasts indicated that patriotic armed bands in Yugoslavia, Greece, Albania, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria were striking isolated Axis garrisons, supply depots, and communications."

The urgency of a second front is felt by these Balkan guerrillas as keenly as by the Red Army. They are our allies who cannot communicate with their British-American comrades-in-arms except by the enemy broadcasting their military exploits. What is *their* strategic orientation? No armchair strategists by any means, they cannot afford to separate the military from the political aspects of the situation.

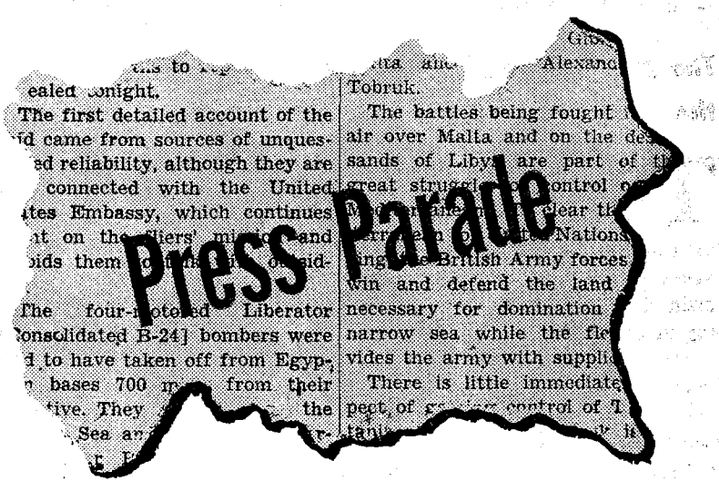
It is to be assumed that they do not believe Goebbels' frantic assurances that the Allied promise of a second front now is bluff. Their orientation is, by necessity, (1) toward each other, toward coordination, cooperation, and amalgamation of all the Balkan guerrilla bands into a Balkan anti-fascist army. In this context the active underground cooperation of anti-fascists in the Hungarian army with the Yugoslav anti-fascist army is epoch-making. It is the harbinger of victory and postwar European democracy. (2) They orient themselves toward the continued struggle of the Red Army. (3) They orient themselves toward a British-American invasion of the Continent. Withal, they orient themselves toward a final showdown in 1942.

THE great chance of these guerrilla movements was a military contact with the Red Army. Hitler prevented that by his initial successes on the Eastern Front. A British-Russian-American alliance, implemented by a second front in Europe, has to make up for this lost opportunity. Military contact with a British-American army of liberation is, to them, necessitated by the strategic retreats of the Red Army as well as offsetting and counterbalancing those reverses. They know that with such military contact, they are military factors of the first order in the anti-Hitler camp and that without such contact, they run the risk of ceasing to be military factors at all. Thus they are vitally interested in the British-American-Russian alliance and its implementation in a second front. There is not the slightest doubt that the chief impetus to the present spectacular growth of the European guerrilla and sabotage movement was given by Molotov's visit in London and Washington.

The boldness of those guerrillas is sustained by an understanding of world politics. What we need is their realistic boldness.

Don't underestimate their importance. If Hitler gets a chance to make their tide recede, to "mop them up," to make them cease functioning as a military factor and convert them simply into a headache for Himmler, you can take it as a sign that we have lost a major ally. Conversely, Hitler cannot prevent their triumphant growth into a large scale European uprising if they can get into military contact with a British-American army of liberation. Then the sting of the hit-and-run guerrilla would inject the fatal poison into the system of the Hitlerian beast.

ANATOL HUSS.



Americans in Russia

IN MOSCOW our band of Americans is far from home, and almost no direct news ever reaches us from Washington. We live on faith, and we want to make ourselves understood when we say over and over that it is understood here that a second front has been promised and promised for very soon. From this country words fly on wings for help.

Ben Robertson in "PM."

IT IS true . . . that not even the bravest troops in the world can hold positions indefinitely in face of great numerical superiority. That is why a second front cannot conceivably be regarded as anything less than an urgent necessity.

Leland Stowe in the New York "Post."

The Fiddler's Tune

SACHA GUITRY—Yvonne Printemps—Pierre Fresnay—Marcel l'Herbier—Maurice Chevalier—Marcel Pagnol—Joanon—

Once these names were on France's roll of honor for the arts. Today they are collaborateurs. Today they dance and sing and play-act for the amusement of their Nazi conquerors in Paris. Today they take Nazi marks with a smile, while Frenchmen fall before firing squads.

This was the information brought from tattered Vichy France by Lieut. Alex Esway, wearer of the Croix de Guerre, who fought the Nazis at the Somme, was captured and later sent back as an invalid war prisoner. He arrived here on a neutral ship and Variety, the theatrical weekly, interviewed him.

The lieutenant, who directed such notable French pictures as "The Baker's Wife," had this to say:

"Joanon made patriotic pictures for France before the war. And Pagnol was once my good friend, with whom I co-directed 'The Baker's Wife.'"

Then there is Guitry—Guitry who drank cocktails with Col. Gen. Stuelpnagel, Nazi commander in Paris, while 200 Frenchmen were being dragged off to be shot to death as hostages. They hooted him. . . .

French films have been degraded and ruined by Nazi influence, he related. Germans insist on bringing brutality into their pictures—beatings, open wounds, the showing of blood. And the French have been staying away from their movies in throngs.

New York "Post."

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THE AIMS OF HITLER'S OFFENSIVE

The grand strategic objective is the oil of Baku. While the Nazis are still a long way off, says Colonel T., the situation is serious unless a Western land front is opened.

THE great German offensive of 1942 actually began one year after June 22. Sevastopol had not yet fallen by a week when the Germans stirred in the Kupyansk sector, preparing the ground for the main thrust which is developing at this writing in the direction of Millerovo.

On July 2 Sevastopol fell and three days later, July 5, the Germans started their "big stuff" with a sustained attack against Voronezh. On July 8 Staryi Oskol was evacuated by Soviet troops for the obvious reason that it was endangered by potential pincers, the branches of which had bypassed it both north and south (the thrust to Voronezh from Kursk and the thrust to Rossosh from Kupyansk). The same fate without doubt must befall the junction of Valuyki and the town of Alexeyevka. On July 9 the station of Rossosh was evacuated by Soviet troops and the Germans were thus at least at one point, sitting astride the main railroad running from Moscow, via Voronezh to Rostov. The Red Army was deprived of the overall use of its main rockade line but not deprived of its feed lines.

What had started on June 27 as a rather narrow wedge aimed eastward from Kursk, a wedge which was less than fifty miles wide at the start, had within ten days been widened to a front of slightly less than 150 miles. There is no doubt that it had been intended as a classical *"Keil und Kessel"* maneuver (wedge and kettle, or encirclement) with the entire area between the Oskol and the Don and between Voronezh and Rossosh as the object of entrapment. But Marshal Timoshenko's two counter-maneuvers frustrated this plan: he attacked northwest of Voronezh and delayed the German thrust to Voronezh, and he drew back in the center (Staryi Oskol) and evaded the trap. And so we have a wide German wedge, instead of a "kettle" between two wedges.

THE Germans, on July 11, began an offensive along the northern boundary of the Donbas at Lissichansk (or Rubezhnaya as it is marked on most maps). There is still too little news of this new thrust to be able to evaluate it. (Lissichansk has been evacuated by Soviet troops.) Finally, on July 10, the Germans had pushed the right flank of their Don wedge to the vicinity of Kantemirovka, thus widening it southward by another thirty miles. (Kantemirovka has been captured.) And there is a distinct possibility that by the time this reaches the reader the German thrust will have widened still more and will reach from just north of Voronezh down to Millerovo, some 200 miles north to south.

Let us briefly examine the strategic aims, the execution, and the immediate possibilities. The grand aim of the Germans is, of course, the oil of Baku, but this is still 800 miles away from Rubezhnaya, which in turn is 500 miles from the Rumanian border, so that the Germans have to march a little less than double the distance they marched in almost thirteen months. The strategic aim of this phase of the campaign is two-fold: first, to cut Timoshenko's army group from Zhukov's army group (center) and roll Timoshenko back into the Caucasus; and, second, to push through to either Stalingrad or Saratov with the object of cutting off the entire Red Army (minus the Timoshenko group) from practically all contact with Baku and whatever Allied aid comes through Iran.

If the Nazis push to Saratov, it would be possible for them to nip off both the Volga traffic and the railroad which runs east of the Volga River, thus throwing all Soviet communications back on the long rail-route through Guriev and the Caspian and Kazakhstan. From Voronezh the Germans have to march 300 miles to Saratov. From Rossosh they have to march 225 miles to Stalingrad.

FINALLY, the immediate German objectives would be, first, to turn and envelop the Donbas from the north and east, and by occupying the entire length of the railroad from Rossosh to Rostov (or even Novocherkassk), to bottle up a good portion of Timoshenko's armies in the great bend of the Don, just as they tried to bottle up Budenny's armies in the bend of the Dneipr last August.

In the possible order of execution, the summary of the German objectives is as follows:

1. Pen up Marshal Timoshenko's southern group in the bend of the Don and take the natural fortress of the Donbas in reverse.

2. Cut Timoshenko off from the Central Front by a thrust to Saratov, or much more probably, to Stalingrad.

3. Deprive the Red Army of Baku oil and of the supplies from Iran.

4. Try to capture the oil of Baku or at least of Maikop (300 miles away) or of Grozny (575 miles away). Here I must add that I do not take into consideration a possible thrust across the Kerch Strait, which would not be easy, but would shorten the above distances by about 125 miles.

So much for the strategic aims of the Germans. What about the execution?

In two weeks the Germans have penetrated roughly to a depth of 100 miles along the Voronezh and Rossosh directions (June 27 to July 11, when this is being written). They have pushed back the Soviet armies on a 200-mile front, but nowhere, so far, have they been able to produce a real breakthrough accompanied by strategic encirclement. Their claims of prisoners captured and trophies taken have been quite modest, as Goebbels claims go. They have not, so far, been able to start anything big on more than one sector.

As to the deductions from these observations, I will let Maj. George Fielding Eliot speak (NY *Herald Tribune,* July 11):

". . . Even in these operations [the Don offensive] there is a suggestion to be drawn from the official accounts that the Germans are not making the same degree of progress which might have been expected under similar circumstances a year ago. . . . Undoubtedly, one of the reasons for slower German progress in 1942 is the fact that the Russian Army has become thoroughly seasoned and thoroughly familiar with German tactics and technique. But there is also some reason to believe that last year's campaign in Russia has blunted the formerly keen edge of the German sword. This is due, in part, to the heavy losses among officers, non-commissioned officers and technicians. . . ."

I subscribe to the Major's opinion, but I, for one, would delete the words "there is some reason to believe." There is no doubt that the German sword has been considerably blunted. *But*—it is still a mighty heavy and sturdy sword. It has lost its "swish," but it still has a mighty "thud."

WHAT are the immediate prospects? I am sorry to say that, if something is not done *now, on land and in Europe,* the prospects are extremely serious. One possibility is this: the Germans will isolate and put out of commission the Army Group of Timoshenko in the bend of the Don. They will take the Donbas in reverse and establish themselves along the Don, satisfied to cover with the Luftwaffe the traffic on the Volga and the railroad to the east of it. They will then seek to force a crossing of the Kerch Strait to take the oilfields of Maikop, establishing a line to the east, running along the Kuban and the Manych to the Don. There they might rest their arms, and in view of the splitting of the Soviet armies of the southern wing from the center and the tremendous weakening resulting from this retreat and the huge battles entailed, the Germans may turn some of their forces and the Luftwaffe in other directions—Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, etc.

This, of course, is a speculation, but a rather logical one, for the Germans know that they can take the Middle East with ten times less troops than they can take the Caucasus. They cannot withdraw these troops and their air power from the Soviet front until they have inflicted a major defeat on the Red Armies. After such a defeat they figure that the Red Army will be compelled to leave them alone for a while. Such a defeat is a real possibility. It makes the second front a life and death matter.

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SPAIN ETERNAL

Six years ago this week the fascists marched on Madrid. Out of that war for independence, writes Ruth McKenney, "came the strength we find today to rise up against the enemy . . . to destroy him."

HITLER and Mussolini attacked the free nation of Spain six years ago this week—July 17, 1936.

Do you remember that July so long ago, that summer buried now in the endless river of time?

July 17, 1936. New York was stinging hot; the pavements sizzled day after day under the burning blue-gray sky. The kids played one-o-cat in the sandlots and America hung over its radio to see if Lou Gehrig had socked another homer for the champion Yankees, the greatest ball team of all time.

July 17, 1936. The people of the United States, paralyzed for years by the shock of economic crisis, the slow despair of depression starvation, rallied in the hot summer to the battle-cry of freedom. The CIO, a new thing, a bold and fierce idea —hardly more—swept through the reopened shops and factories, mines, and mills. In the spring men had whispered: CIO! In the spring men had watched the very first sitdown strike in the rubber mills of Akron, watched, wondered, considered. Now by July men roared: CIO! And the organization of America's working class was just around the corner, like the reelection of Franklin D. Roosevelt on his New Deal platform.

July 17, 1936. Life had juice, here in America; life seemed breathless and swift with hope, exploding with dreams ready at last to come true. In the great stretches of the blast furnaces, in every dirty little hole in the wall factory, men grinned and felt, and often said: The world is our oyster, hey, watch our dust!

July 17, 1936. The headlines for that fatal day set the pattern of the gigantic lie that was to cripple this nation of free men, strangle the beautiful courage of the men and women of Spain, and finally deliver the whole world to the unspeakable sufferings of modern war.

The headlines said: REDS BURN CHURCHES, RAPE NUNS: CIVIL WAR SWEEPS SPAIN, FRANCO SEEKS TO RESTORE ORDER.

Fifteen-year-old kids glanced idly at those burning lies and turned to the sports page, never thinking that in the black headline type lay their draft order-number; never knowing that before they were fully grown, before they were men with jobs and wives and kids and hopes, those fatal headlines would overtake them, to put to them the question free men must always answer: liberty or death?

We must thank the arrogance of our enemies that today, only six years after the fact, we know the detailed truth of the destruction of Spain, the slaughter of peace. In Victorian

That's how the defenders of Madrid felt when they saw the first Soviet planes over their city. Robert Capa's epic photograph captures the elation and relief which all Europe will feel when the second front is opened.

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times historians would have had to wait for the opening of sealed archives, the whispered deathbed confessions of international criminals. But we know—only six years too late. We know. Hitler boasted; Hitler, bloodied with the dead of Spain, proud with the new title, conqueror of Prague; Hitler, contemptuous of the "silly little men" in the democracies, told us all about it.

On July 17, 1936, while we turned the radio dial to the Yankee broadcast, while we watched the CIO building freedom in the minds of men long enslaved, while we watched, with pride, our country emerge from its long tragedy of the depression, Hitler gave the signal for the opening of the world war. According to his own proud words, the plot was two-sided; for England, France, and the United States there was the great lie to lull public opinion, to give the native appeasers the assist-play. For the people of Spain, the chosen first victims on the continent of Europe, there was Hitler's pride, his first panzer division to see action. Hitler stated—after Spain fell—that the first lot of his picked troops sailed from Hamburg on a new German destroyer July 16, 1936, a day before the bought-off Franco and his corrupt Spanish generals were to betray their native land and give the signal for the "civil war" that sold the nation of their birth to the invader.

BUT even the best laid plans of dictators can go astray. Hitler and his puerile-minded captain, Mussolini, had planned a quick grab. While the press of the democracies thundered "Red rapists," the heavily armed legions of fascism, somewhat encumbered, it is true, by the traitor-generals of Spain, would crush the people of Spain as a preoccupied housewife idly swats down the drowsy fly. It was to be swift, simple, and neat: no fuss, no feathers, no bother. The whole thing would last two, three, perhaps four months. The world would never know what hit it; the hand is quicker than the eye. Spain was to be a rabbit out of Hitler's hat. After it was all over, the people would be broken, in despair; Spain would be the graveyard of men's hopes.

The story of Spain, in retrospect, takes on a grandeur that fills the free mind with a slow, stately, and implacable pride. It is true that we lost; it is true that first Barcelona and then Madrid went down under the terrible strength of the fascist armies. But Spain is a great paradox; we lost the battle, but we won the world. For slowly—too slowly—but nevertheless completely and surely, the free men of the whole world learned from the majestic tragedy of Spain that fascism must be, will be, destroyed. We learned, from Spain. At what cost none of us likes to remember. But nevertheless, we learned. Out of the agony, out of the years and years the people of Spain spent on the slowly revolving rack, hearing their bones crack under the endless torture, hearing the hopeless screams of their children and wives and old mothers; out of the long history of the Spanish fight for independence, pages written in the freely given blood of brave men; out of Madrid and Barcelona, came the strength we find today to rise up against the enemy and, at whatever sacrifice, to destroy him, to destroy even the memory of shame.

When, against the bright blue of a tropical sky, a lonely American airplane appears and drives swiftly, fiercely, thousands of feet into the spitting, flashing fire of Japanese guns, to drop its bomb-load, to chalk up another ship on the United Nations war tally, then Spain lives again.

When, walking softly in the night, the English Commandos pick their way through German pill-boxes, and softly, softly, surround the gun emplacements to strike at the Nazi regiments; then Madrid blazens its great slogan to the whole world, Madrid, the tomb of fascism.

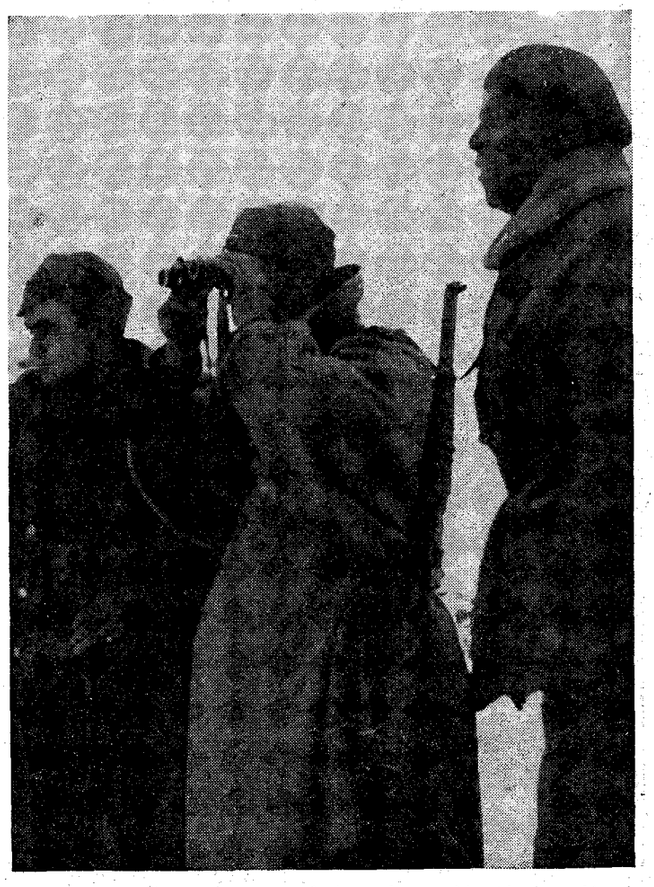
And when, with their backs to the rubble of the city they loved, the people of Sevastopol gave their lives, one by one, down to the high-school kids and the grandmas, gave their blood and living flesh rather than live to see the Nazi flag over their homeland; then Spain, Spain, Spain of the long agony, Spain of the courage that would not, could not, die, lives again.

There was a time, not very long ago, when the memory of Spain seemed past enduring. After the fall of Madrid the world appeared beaten into hopeless submission. Hour after hour we sat by our victrolas listening to the records we all learned by heart, listening to the voices of dead men, recreated on the lifeless mechanism, sing, "We fight for you: FREIHEIT!" And in those terrible months we mourned our dead of the immortal International Brigade. Who did not think in those hard days of the friend, the comrade, dead in some lonely grave, fallen on a foreign soil, his life given for a cause seemingly hopelessly lost. It was the loneliness that hurt so much; the isolation. While the French traitors sold Paris to the Nazis, while the appeasers still sat high and mighty over the prostrate English people, the graves in Spain were far away.

I know a man who is the only survivor of a regiment—yes, count the numbers over—a regiment that fell holding Madrid that week of November 1936. Surgeons cured him of his wounds after years in hospitals; he walks again, a whole man. But during the long years of defeat, he was a man oppressed, the breath came hard in him. Night after night he lived with the ghosts of men endlessly betrayed.

But on New Year's Eve, 1942, he stood in his new uniform of the Army of the United States and raised his glass proudly to toast his fallen friends.

He said, "To the dead of Spain and their friends who came from every country to fight for freedom at Madrid! They are not dead! They are winning at Moscow! They are winning at Leningrad! Yes, and they will win at Paris! They will win at Shanghai! They will win at Prague! They will win on the Western Front! They are not dead! They live in the hearts of free men tonight, and for always. To our comrades forever! Salud!" RUTH MCKENNEY.



Volunteers for liberty: veterans of the unforgettable Abraham Lincoln Brigade, observing enemy positions. Hundreds of them are waiting today for the final assault on fascism.

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WHAT MAKES CONGRESS TICK

Why your legislator votes the way he does. A letter a day will help keep the defeatists away. The influence of lobbies. Fourth article in Bruce Minton's series on Congress.

Washington.

SOME doubt existed over the way the House would vote on an important measure. For his part, Representative Cox of Georgia admitted he did not know what to do. "Not so easy," he complained to the inquiring reporter. "Some of the biggest people in my district think I should vote for the bill. But some just as big people think I should vote against it. I wish to hell they'd get together. It's not a very happy thing for me to sit here not knowing which way they want me to make up my mind."

Seldom does the gentleman from Georgia have to solve such head-splitting puzzles. Most of the time he can sit back and await guidance from the proper minority in his district, or from a well-dressed emissary. Yet even in this crisis an unerring instinct touched his trembling ears—as the poet says—and his record remained unsullied by even one quasi-progressive vote.

Because of the poll tax, the lot of Cox and his colleagues is far simpler than it is for the majority of congressmen. Cox was elected in 1940 by less than seven percent of his district's population. He and sixteen poll-tax senators and seventy-seven other poll-tax representatives from Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia take special care to please only a few thousand back home—the few thousand wealthy enough to exercise their rights of citizenship.

The poll-taxers, speaking as they do for five to fifteen percent of the people in their eight states, quite logically cling to southern bourbonism. It is clear enough what makes them tick. But the remaining majority in Congress are subject to complex pressures. They enjoy no such easy lives. They are continually conscious of all sorts of strains—even more varied and upsetting than the dilemma of which Cox complained. As Monograph 26 of the Temporary National Economic Committee put it: "The factors which influence legislators are only rarely the opinions of their colleagues uttered in formal debate in Congress. They are the legislator's own political convictions, his mail from his district or state, the lobbyists who approach him in his office, or in the halls of the Capitol, or the witnesses who appear before him in committee."

HOW do these influences work? When it comes to the outright appeasers, their personal bias and commitments lead them to oppose (or since open obstruction may prove dangerous, to delay and confuse) the anti-fascist war effort. But today, most congressmen—conservative, liberal, and "neutral" alike—support the war. Their attitude on any problem is the result of pressures brought to bear on them from various sources and of their own judgment as to the needs of the war effort.

Without exception the members take their mail very seriously. Unless some emergency upsets the routine, senators and representatives spend at least two hours every morning studying letters from home. They have no easy time keeping in touch with constituents—their mail provides the link. Members of Congress seldom forget that they must return to their states and districts sooner or later to stand for reelection. This healthy concern with the future helps keep them aware of the voters' wishes—when the voters express these wishes. Even the out-and-out reactionaries are not immune: Representative Pheiffer of New York, with a lamentable record, voted against the Dies committee—one of the three Republicans to do so—because among other pressures his mail made him uncomfortably conscious of liberal and labor opinion in his district. The anti-Semitic, pro-fascist Rankin of Mississippi speaks as a shining exponent of public power projects because the small businessmen from his home area do not neglect to write him their views in no uncertain terms. Sweeney of Ohio, friend of Coughlin and Gerald L. K. Smith, took the barrage of letters from his highly industrialized district so to heart that he voted for WPA, and against both the Smith amendment to the Wagner act and the Smith anti-strike bill.

The mail is only one form of pressure. The administration cannot be readily ignored—particularly not by the Democrats. Of course, the poll-taxers again are fairly immune. No senator or representative, however, is eager to break with the party machinery and all this machinery means at election time. The incumbents expect and urgently require party endorsement and help when they again face the electorate. They cannot afford to get too far out of line.

TAKE the case of Democratic Senator X. He is expected to look after the best interests of the people in his state during his six years in Washington. If he were so foolish as consistently to refuse any cooperation with the administration, he would in all likelihood be unable to satisfy his constituents, who elected him, among other things, to support administration policies. Senator X usually shows a good deal of interest when the administration makes clear demands.

The administration also has other ways of exerting leadership. Cabinet officers, or their lieutenants, appear regularly at congressional investigations and hearings. Their opinions carry prestige with the voters. When the President or a leading member of the Cabinet addresses the nation by radio, congressmen must show good reason for refusing to follow—or else constituents may call for an accounting.

Nor can Republicans ignore an administration whose war program represents the wishes of an overwhelming majority of the voters of all parties. They have requests of their own to make on departments and the executive. But most of all, during the present war emergency, the demarcation between Republicans and Democrats tends to disappear; judgments are made on the record of the individual congressmen, how they voted and responded to the needs of war. Since Pearl Harbor, both the Republicans and Democrats have agreed to war appropriations without demur. Anyone caught delaying war funds because of a penchant for petty politics would not stand much chance when he faced his constituents in November. Even the appeasement-minded Senators Wheeler and Nye know this—and vote the money, *after stirring up the maximum confusion and doubt.* In calling for "a guiding policy

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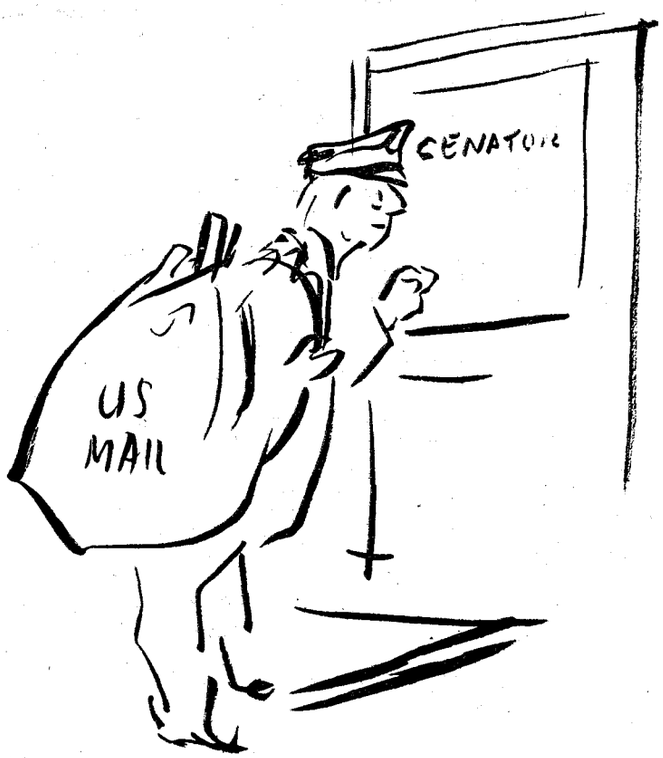

for victory," and for "such a Congress as will strongly express this line of policy," Earl Browder, in his recent speech at Madison Square Garden, denied that the present Congress follows such a victory program. He remarked: "After voting appropriations, it (Congress) continues politics-as-usual, worse than the industrialist or labor leader who continues business-as-usual."

The administration wields great power as the center of the war effort apart from all partisan considerations. Even so, this past year has found the President confronted with a Congress inclined to be uncooperative on a number of questions. Many war measures have been in danger of defeat. Revolts led by appeasers and poll-taxers, defeatists and ultra-reactionaries, have delayed and at times hampered the prosecution of the war. How is this possible? To answer this question, it is first necessary to glance at the pressure groups, some of which operate to frustrate the administration and the voters.

TODAY in Washington over 6,000 lobbies press for legislation deemed favorable in their eyes, while guarding against legislation considered harmful. From the start, it is important to make clear that lobbies in themselves are not necessarily to be condemned. Many lobbies, to be sure, use methods that hardly serve to endear them to the public. But because some lobbies abuse power, a tendency arises to consider all lobbies with suspicion. This is unfortunate. There is nothing wrong in bringing a valid point of view to the attention of the legislators; in fact, far from wrong, democracy works to the extent that the people can persuade Congress to act as the majority desires.

Doubtless certain groups exerting power in Washington often do not speak for any considerable section of the population. The worst offender is probably the US Chamber of Commerce. A small executive within this body pretends to talk for the entire membership—but in most cases this top group acts in direct contradiction to the best interests of the majority of Chamber affiliates.

The Chamber's spokesmen in Washington take as their main job to press the fight against organized labor. Presumably out of the grass roots of the South and Middle West came the deluge of letters last March urging anti-strike legislation and the cancellation of the forty-hour week. But on inquiry, this sudden upsurge of "public opinion" proved spurious, organized, and manipulated by the top leadership of the Chamber and by some of its more reactionary allies. The procedure was described by an Oklahoma school teacher in a letter to William Green, AFL president: "Our principal," she wrote, "Mr. Charles Evans, requested and practically required us as teachers to sponsor the letter writing of these small children to their congressmen in regard to this matter. I do not know how many letters were written, but it is estimated at 1,300. This was in no way voluntary on the part of the teachers or pupils. . . . No doubt you will find Mr. Evans is one of the men who started this war on labor."

Throughout this campaign the labor situation was misrepresented, as President Roosevelt intimated at a press conference. The demonstration almost convinced Congress. Until Senator Thomas of Utah remarked: "I want to show where the grass roots opinion of the country comes from. It comes from a marble hall in Washington."

INTERESTINGLY, the clique in the US Chamber of Commerce and their friends in the various states recognized the effectiveness of letters from home. Many congressmen, thinking the mail was genuine, began to wring their hands and line up with the anti-labor forces—until they were informed of the trickery. But the deception in no way derogates legitimate letter campaigns. In this case the campaign misrepresented for the purpose of benefiting a narrow group of die-hards. Similarly, when the House rejected Senate appropriations for FSA as well as the amendment permitting the sale of surplus agricultural commodities below parity, the Washington *Post* reported: "Before every member was a letter from the American Farm Bureau Federation which insisted on parity price levels, but said farmers strongly favor economy in agricultural appropriations." The heads of the Bureau, discussed in the preceding article, lobbied for a few large landholders, for not more than five percent of the farmers. Notice, however, that the Bureau's letter insisted that "farmers strongly favor," thus stressing "public opinion."

Like the leadership of the Chamber, a similar defeatist group within the National Association of Manufacturers organized the National Industrial Information Committee, which claims to talk for 350 leaders of industry. But this group in practice does not express the win-the-war attitude of the main body of American industrialists. Today, confronted by the

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struggle for national survival against the Axis powers, the majority of industrialists are concerned with production, with assuming the offensive against the fascist armies, with building maximum unity throughout the nation for a speedy and complete victory over America's enemies. The protest heard in certain big business circles against the Bridges deportation order of Attorney General Biddle, the growing participation of the largest factory owners in management-labor cooperation plans, the revolt even in leading financial circles against the isolationist policies of the defeatists still influential in the Republican Party—all these tendencies give proof that the anti-labor, disruptionist NAM minority speak only for a handful of unrelenting reactionaries out of step with most of the business world and out of step with the wishes of the people in general.

The roster of officers of the National Industrial Information Committee testifies to the character of the organization. H. W. Prentis, Jr. of the Armstrong Cork Co. vigorously supported Franco during the Spanish war; J. H. Pew, president of Sun Oil, helped organize the pro-fascist Sentinels of the Republic; Walter P. Fuller of the Curtis Publishing Co. used the *Saturday Evening Post* to disseminate anti-Semitic and pro-appeasement propaganda.

It was reactionary lobbies of this kind, together with the wealthy farm lobbies, that were largely responsible for the congressional revolt against price control. They persuaded the House Ways and Means Committee to scrap the administration's tax program. They egged on the labor-baiters and the "economy bloc." They pushed the attacks on the Office of Civilian Defense and the Office of Facts and Figures. They supported the "farm bloc's" assault on the Farm Security Administration. They engineered the cancelation of CCC funds. They stood behind every criticism of the National Labor Relations Act and the forty-hour week. In truth, these special lobbies of the very few blazed the trail during recent months for the defeatists and reactionaries in Congress.

IN CONTRADISTINCTION are the lobbies speaking for large aggregations of citizens. These people's lobbies have achieved important victories. Organized labor, threatened by the Vinson, Smith, and Connally bills, hurriedly mobilized its forces: almost every international union sent its president to Washington. Joseph Curran from New York, Reid Robinson from Denver, R. J. Thomas from Detroit, Harry Bridges from San Francisco, scores of other labor leaders, called on the legislators; enthusiasm on the Hill for anti-labor legislation that would disrupt national unity perceptively cooled. Reassured by this demonstration, the administration responded by throwing cold water on other plans to shackle labor—thereby proving that once labor asserts itself, the administration is stimulated and encouraged to reinforce its leadership. By just such pressure, the unions have been able to protect the wage-hour law, the Wagner act, and other measures that are vital to the most vigorous prosecution of the war. In like fashion, the National Farmers Union, joined by the AFL and CIO, convinced the Senate to restore House cuts in FSA, and they are now carrying their campaign to the House. The small business lobby, again with labor's help, got the Senate Murray committee to recommend legislation to enlist the smaller firms in the war production program. People's lobbies are pressing for fair taxation, urging restoration of the administration's tax program.

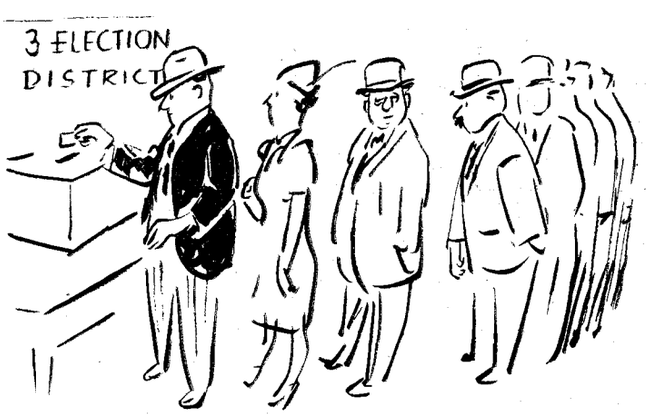
So far, however, the people's lobbies have been aroused only by emergencies, only when forced to act in self-protection. For its part, labor has failed to exert continual, unrelenting pressure. Campaigns to educate and inform Congress remain sporadic, though labor's ability to put across ideas—and especially to put across ideas that directly spur the war effort—has been illustrated repeatedly by the significant achievements of lobbies conducted by individual unions. The CIO Maritime Committee, coordinating the legislative activities of several marine unions, cut through red tape to speed loadings and to improve the efficiency of the merchant marine—attested to by the employers on the West Coast. The United Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers forwarded management-labor plans, and with small business accelerated the conversion of the electric washing machine and other industries to war production. The Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers won adoption of the union's blueprint to increase production of non-ferrous metals. The United Automobile Workers and the United Steel Workers aided conversion. Labor has achieved much through its agitation and pressure. But it has not used its strength to the maximum; it has not made Congress sufficiently conscious of the need of giving labor that kind of partnership in the production program and in government which can be of the utmost value in winning the war and solving the problems of peace. Nor have the unions been sufficiently active in the election campaign or sufficiently vocal in regard to such major political issues as the new Washington-London-Moscow agreements.

Labor, consumers, small business, dirt farmers, neighborhood and church groups, and the majority of pro-war industrialists—these categories of citizens have still to achieve full effectiveness in expressing their wishes. The "people's lobbies," in the formative stages, are inclined to await rather than to anticipate emergencies. In Congress reaction is noisy and coordinated: the people are just learning how to counter it.

AND SO we return to the question asked early in this discussion: How has it been possible for Congress, in face of popular sentiment and of administration leadership, to endanger so many war measures and to have failed to push the war more vigorously? The actions of the lobbies provide a clue. The greatest lobby pressures still come from organized reaction. But since Congress responds to outside influences, this situation can be rapidly changed if the people are properly organized and if they act in the elections to retire from public life some fifty or sixty of the worst appeasers and obstructionists. The task is not easy. But as one commentator remarked, national unity to win the war cannot be a passive affair; unity must be won through coordinated struggle directed toward clearly defined ends.

In the concluding article of this series I want to discuss some perspectives of the coming elections. These elections are crucial, but whatever their outcome, the present Congress can be made to respond far more than it has to the needs of America at war. The responsibility for Congress still rests with the nation.

BRUCE MINTON.
With the assistance of Charles Humboldt.



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JOE LOUIS, SOLDIER

An interview with the Brown Bomber who was in the ring against fascism years back. "Sure ain't nothing in that I'm for." Why sharecroppers say "You've given us hope. Keep on."

"You ought to do everything you can at a time like this." It's just as simple as that for some. It's just as simple as that to the man who said that.

He doesn't say much. He's not a talker. That way, too, he's like so many others. When he talks at all, his words aren't fancy ones. Ifs, buts, and on-the-other-hand are noticeably absent. He just says: "I'm really happy that I'm able enough," unglib, halting, "that I'm able to do what I'm doing, what I have did and what I'm going to do.

"I'm only doin' what any red-blooded American would," he says, and there's the ring of sincerity to it.

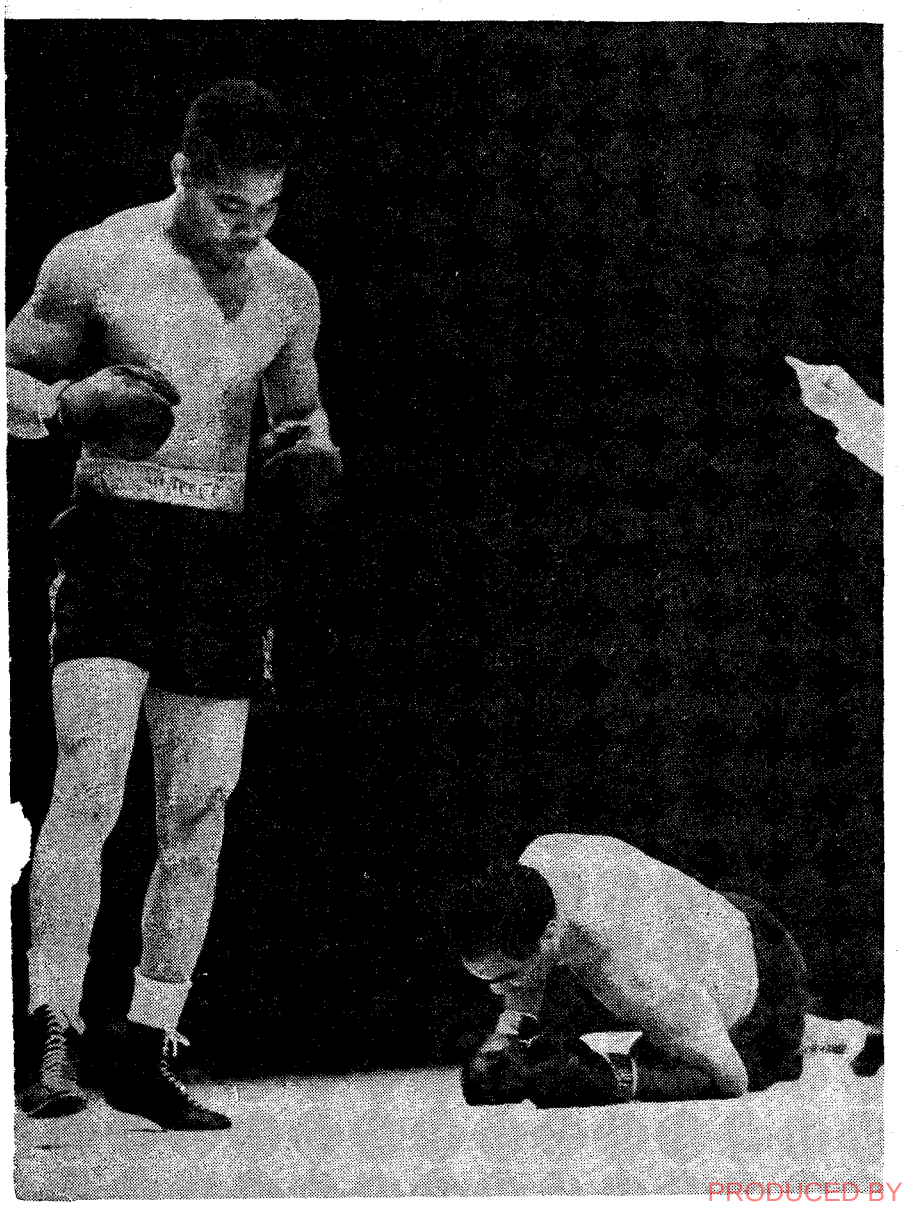
That's a man talking now, buddy, and a fighter. That's Joe Louis speaking and he's not fooling.

After he got up and spoke out recently before tens of thousands of people, I heard men say: Look. He's sure developed, hasn't he. Sure, he's developed. I guess a lot of us have. But when they say: How that fellow's changed. Why, he didn't know from nothing—they just don't know what they're talking about.

The wise guys that say those things are saying them about the rest of us too, about all the Joes and Harrys and Marys. And that's another reason why the rest of us tingle some and thrill with Joseph Louis Barrow. Like one guy said: "He's like our soul going marchin'—and fightin'—on."

Sure, he said, "There's a lot wrong with this country, but Hitler ain't going to fix it." He wasn't talking just for himself when he said that. And it wasn't an idea he picked up all of a sudden, either.

The Nazi Schmeling tastes the dirt, just before the knockout.



It was just about exactly six years ago, when too, too many still thought they could do business with Hitler, that we were talking about the Olympic games that were to be held in Germany. It was at the dinner table at Joe's training camp—the first bout with Schmeling was coming up—and the twenty-two-year-old fighter packed away a huge steak, somewhere near a half acre of celery, and sundry other edibles as we discussed the coming into their own of Negro fighters and other athletes on the Olympic team that year.

"Some of them may not go over there, anyway," someone said, and I looked at Joe. He shook his head slowly from side to side.

(Well, they did go and Jesse Owens ran their lies down their Nazi throats.)

"The Olympic committee's having a lot of trouble getting the money," commented John Roxborough, quiet-voiced Detroit lawyer and one of Joe's managers. "There's a good chance they won't be able to make it after all."

"They asked me for somethin' to help them out," Louis said, between bites, "but I sure don' feel like doin' it."

"Why not?" I wanted to know.

"Listen," he said, and leaned over the table with that big, brown left that men in the ring have thought was a thunderbolt, thrust toward my face. "Any other year they wouldn't have no trouble, but who'd want to he'p them go *there*?"

"If they'd shift the games to somewhere else," another suggested, and Joe nodded decisively, his face set in that inscrutable mask that hundreds of thousands of fight fans have seen, never changing, in the ring.

"Of course, no Negro would want. . . ." I started, but Joe interrupted.

"Any American," he said, "that believes in fair play and the rights of people, ought to feel that way. I sure don't want to he'p that sorta thing. 'Course I'm a Negro, but it's not only that. . . ."

"Well, did you give them anything?" I insisted, knowing something of the politics of the fight game, in which Louis' managers are past masters.

"No," he answered in that soft way of his, the words buried somewhere in his throat, but giving a definite feeling of finality. There was no mistake about it: Joe Louis was opposed to American participation in the Nazi Olympic games.

Little as Joe talks now, it's certainly more than he did in the years past when he was battling his way through—the fifth child of poor farmers on a small, ten-acre cotton farm near Lafayette, Chambers County, Ala.

Today, in the spotlight as a $2,000,000 heavyweight champ, who's k.o.ed five other world champions, the wise guys will take all the bets they can get on him, the rest of us common guys are proud if we can wear the same uniform he does and it's news when he cracks a smile.

But don't ever think that because a guy doesn't spill everything he knows or feels, that he neither knows nor feels.

When you see him in the ring, he may be just another beautifully stacked up young man, smooth brown skin stretched over his sloping shoulders, rippling muscles, and solid legs. Maybe he has a quick right hand that can strike before anyone quite knows it's started. Maybe he has a sock in the left mitt that comes suddenly out of a seemingly clear sky and leaves such a mark that they've called him the Tan Thunderbolt. So what, you ask?

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Start out twenty-two years ago to find out. Start out but don't forget the fields you pass through, the fields with the long rows of cotton and the million Joe Louises bending over those rows today, from sunup to sundown in the blazing sun. Some of those people know Joe Louis as "kinfolk o' mine." Down in Chambers County, Alabama, the "kinfolk" of a great fighter joined the Sharecroppers' Union, now part of the CIO Agricultural Workers' organization.

I spoke of this union, of their struggles, to the serious-faced boy whose proportions made the rest of us look small. They used to tell tales in the cabins of Alabama, Louisiana, Georgia, of John Henry, the mighty black man with no fear in his heart, no weakness in his tremendous limbs. Now it's Joe Louis, whose six feet and one inch is all power and muscle, perfectly timed and tuned.

"Sure a union's good for folks. They can get together and help themselves," he said, and I thought of some of the letters which had been written to him. Church congregations in the Black Belt are praying for Joe Louis, and I have seen meetings in those same churches praying for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys, pledging to fight for the freedom of another great Negro fighter, Angelo Herndon.

One letter to Joe Louis from a little town in Georgia contained a picture of a baby. It was the white baby of a "po' white" cropper. "I named him Joe Louis W——," the letter said, "he was born the night you stopped Baer. More power to you."

"A fellow has to start out hungry to be a great fighter," Jack Dempsey once told me, and you can't forget that about this boy from the Alabama cotton fields and the assembly line of Ford's Detroit factory.

On fight night it was the hungry, the dispossessed, and the unpossessed grouped about the radios from coast to coast who were in there cheering for Joe to "Hit him again, boy! Sock him, son!" It will be the worker in San Antonio who has written asking to help him get a pair of cork legs to take the place of those that had to be amputated after an industrial accident, who will whisper, "Hit him for me, Joe." Or perhaps even the group of boys organized in a sports club in Dusseldorf, Germany, who wrote back then asking him to beat Herr Max, "Please, Joe, and good luck. Will you send us your picture, with an autograph."

Those boys may have been put into military uniforms now, but I don't think they want to fight against Corporal Barrow and his buddies.

The men and boys bending over the ever faster assembly line at River Rouge, Michigan, are thinking of this lad who fought his way out.

First, the cotton fields. Next, an ice-wagon helper in Detroit at a dollar a week, and an amateur fight club he could sneak off to while his mother thought he was taking violin lessons. Then, the assembly line at Ford's before his fists tattooed his name on the roster of fight fame.

Two incidents stand out above all others in Joe's memories of his amateur days when he twice fought his way to the national Amateur Athletic Union light-heavy semi-finals, and copped the medal the second time up, in April 1934. Both happened in Chicago.

As national AAU light-heavyweight champ he was scheduled to fight in an international competition during May 1934, in the Windy City.

Already at the ringside, the police decided that he should be arrested as a suspect in a wife murder case which had occurred in South Bend, Ind., some years before. It didn't matter at all that the wanted man was fifteen years older than Joe, nor that the turnkey at the jail knew the fugitive and, as he later admitted, knew Joe didn't answer his description. That's the way they prevented Joe Louis, the Negro Knockout Powder, from fighting in those bouts.

"I didn't know what it was all about, then," the fighter told me when relating the second incident, and by almost imperceptible signs his face took on a battling hardness, his broad nostrils dilated, his dark brown eyes narrowed, and his large mouth tightened.

In uniform, Joe Louis waves to the Garden crowd.

"But they couldn't get away with it again!" and his tremendous right fist nervously taps his knee. It was at the Illinois Athletic Club in Chicago, and amateur bouts were being fought.

"The colored fighters had to go up the back way," Joe told me. "They wouldn't let us go in the front with the others.

"I'd tear the damn buildin' down before that'd happen again," he said. He meant it, too.

Even in the few years of this slow-spoken, dignified young man's life, great blows have been struck against the front-door-for-whites-only policy and great steps have been taken. Joseph Louis Barrow has struck some resounding blows himself.

DID you ever see the guy fight? Going along, not saying anything, not moving hardly except his feet that seem just to flow easy from here to there, not doing anything you might even say for a moment. Then wham! The thing explodes just like that in a man's face, before you know it's even coming.

That's how some of his whacks at discrimination and other less-than-American policies have exploded in the faces of those who were trying to hold back democracy. After all, ranting old Jim Crow looks pretty cheap, set up beside this proud but humble young corporal in the uniform of the Army of the United States, offering what he has, his championship, money, his life. Or beside Dorie Miller, manning the machine gun at Pearl Harbor.

"If I ever do anything to disgrace my people, I hope I die," Louis said.

For the fascist-minded he has always had contempt and a healthy dislike, to put it mildly. Back before his first fight with "The Nazi Uhlan" he told me, "Sure ain't nothing in that I'm for," when we were discussing the Black Legion, then at the height of its power as one of the Ku Klux Klan-Christian Front-Bund type of terrorist organization. He spoke in the same quiet, determined but decisive way that he had just disposed of a half dozen sparring partners.

Joe Louis is a fighter and you can take it from the wise guys, there's none better around right now.

And the letters still come: "God bless you, Joe Louis," reads one from the deep South. "You've given us hope. Keep on."

Then his answer: "This is Joe, mother. This Army's all right and I'm doin' okay. I fought a lot of fights before but this fight's the biggest one I ever been in and it's one I haven't got any doubts about helping to win." That was a message to his mother.

I guess it could be a message to all of us.

BLAINE OWEN.

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NEW MASSES
ESTABLISHED 1911

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The Battle for Rubber

THE millions of old galoshes, bathing caps, and mats showered into the nationwide collection of scrap will probably add about 200,000 tons of usable rubber to our present supply. That's fine, but it isn't enough. *It isn't enough to win the war.* Such is the true situation, as set forth in a relentlessly factual survey published in the New York *Herald Tribune.* By April of this year the Rubber Reserve Corp., an agency established under the Reconstruction Finance Corp., had rounded up only 673,000 tons of crude rubber, including some snatched out of the Far East before the Japanese got it. We can't get any more from that source, of course, until Japan is beaten. And in addition to supplying our own war needs, the United States has lend-lease commitments on rubber to both Great Britain and the Soviet Union, which are also cut off from the great Far Eastern world supply. Our British ally manufactures no synthetic rubber and the USSR doesn't yet produce enough.

We've been hearing a good deal about plans to produce synthetic rubber in this country. So far they are little more than plans. So far, indeed, the synthetic rubber situation has not progressed beyond the point of an unsettled war between the rubber-from-petroleum and rubber-from-alcohol groups. It is now beginning to be admitted that the latter method—converting grains into alcohol and thence into butadiene, the base of synthetic rubber—is faster than petroleum conversion and requires less use of critical war materials in plant facilities. Moreover, there is a surplus of grains. But the petroleum companies have always insisted that synthetic rubber was their own private concern—Standard Oil, it will be remembered, withheld from the United States government and from other American companies a synthetic rubber patent which it had turned over to Hitler. And Jesse Jones of the RFC, who is chiefly responsible for the purchase of rubber, has done nothing to lessen those companies' domination of the synthetic field. His indifference to making rubber from agricultural products—and even to better methods of petroleum conversion—is notorious.

This particular bottleneck should be broken quickly by pressure from the people as a whole. Meanwhile, every possible bit of existing rubber must become government property. Turning in the junked articles is a help, yes—but wouldn't it be more effective if the donors weren't able to go to the nearest drugstore and replace the junk with brand-new rubber articles? And while we're asking questions: why put away a car to save gasoline and leave on it four perfectly good rubber tires that will deteriorate in the garage? In fact, why not ration gas nationally to cut down the joy-riding—or even requisition the non-essential tires, as President Roosevelt has suggested might be necessary? This is no ordinary "conserve the rubber" campaign—it's a win-or-lose proposition. The labor unions can add still more to their splendid war contributions by taking the lead in an all-out program to build the rubber stockpile for victory.

The Day of Judgment Nears

IT'S less than four months, at this writing, to what may well be the most important elections ever held in America. Primaries have already been held in twelve states and "trends" are busily noted by political commentators, although the fact is that few definite conclusions can be drawn from the results thus far. In some states the returns have been hopeful—appeaser candidates like Sen. James J. Davis and a former America Firster candidate for Congress, Robert S. Garland, were licked in the Pennsylvania primaries, while three congressmen who voted against Martin Dies won renomination. Rep. James C. Oliver of Maine, an isolationist before Pearl Harbor, lost the Republican primary to Robert Hale, supporter of the administration's foreign policy. On the other hand, the Chicago *Tribune* pets, Sen. C. Wayland Brooks and Rep. Stephen Day, were renominated by the Republicans—although a strong fight against them is already on, with both CIO and AFL backing the win-the-war candidates, Rep. Raymond McKeough and Benjamin S. Adamowski.

In last week's issue we outlined the situation in New York, where the gubernatorial election still holds the spotlight. At this writing the only candidates in the field are the two machine-picked ones: Thomas Dewey, Republican, and Atty. Gen. John J. Bennett, Democrat. However, it is reported that President Roosevelt has given his approval to Sen. James Mead as a candidate who can win the support of labor and progressive forces. Certainly he is a far better choice than either Bennett or Dewey. He has a sound record so far as the war is concerned, while Bennett's lip service to the Roosevelt foreign policy can't obscure his Jim Farley type of political thinking—or the fact that he presided at a pro-Franco meeting in 1936, under the sponsorship of Edward Lodge Curran. Regarding Dewey, the defeatist New York *Daily News* has come forward with a kiss of death—it chooses him to "save democracy" from Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944! Around Mead, or Lieut. Gov. Charles Poletti, a broad coalition of victory forces in the Democratic, Republican, and American Labor Parties can form a united front.

One notable victory for the nation has already been won in California. The Supreme Court of that state has restored the Communist Party to the ballot, overturning the 1940 law which barred the party as advocating "overthrow of the government by force and violence." No evidence, says the Supreme Court, was presented to prove that the Communist Party comes under this definition. Not only is the decision important because it puts a crimp in the plans of reactionaries who hope to make use of Attorney General Biddle's deportation ruling against Harry Bridges. It is also a victory because it restores franchise rights to a party whose full participation in the elections adds that much more to the chances of electing men and women who are genuinely set on winning this war.

Herr Jim Crow—Fifth Columnist

A MELODRAMATIC story came over the wires of the Associated Press and United Press and was printed in many newspapers of July 11—that twelve Negro soldiers at Flagstaff, Ariz., armed with sub-machine guns and a shotgun, had menaced a restaurant proprietor, and that a brave policeman had had to shoot one of the Negroes and wound two others. The principal thing wrong with the story was that it wasn't true. For this fact we are indebted to the New York *Daily Worker,* which telephoned the executive officer of the Arizona Army post, Capt. R. M. Stanford, and got a denial. True, a Negro was killed and two others wounded; but, according to Captain Stanford, there were no machine guns involved, and no riot.

Where did the AP and UP get such a story? They got it from police officers, who invented it, doubtless to cover up the real truth. And what the truth—the whole truth—is, we do not know at this time. We do know, however, that there have been such shootings before and always as the result of discriminatory practices against Negro soldiers. It has happened in both southern and northern camps. Intoler-

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able enough in themselves, these episodes are all the more outrageous as symptoms of the racial discrimination which still persists in America's military and civilian life. It is a discrimination articulated in its loudest and crudest form by a man like Gov. Eugene Talmadge of Georgia, whose campaign for re-election features a promise to keep Negroes out of the public schools and "drive carpet-baggers from the state."

One of the cruder devices of Jim Crow, the poll tax, could be abolished right now if the electorate acted vigorously enough. At this writing fifty more congressional signatures on a petition will bring the Pepper-Geyer anti-poll tax bill out of the House Rules Committee and onto the floor. The Rules Committee will never bring the bill out itself—it is dominated by men who stay in office because of the poll tax. But your congressman can sign the petition to get it out—he can then vote for its passage.

How Best to Serve

THE controversy over the draft status of Ralph Ingersoll, editor and publisher of *PM,* is engaging the attention of many patriots—as well as others, like Congressman Rankin—whose interest is more than suspect. In considering this issue, one fact is undeniable and Mr. Ingersoll himself has been in the forefront to maintain it: serving our country as a soldier is the transcendant honor of our times. The next question, arising from this, is how *best* to serve. The intimate relationship between homeguard and frontline in this war is greater than ever: questions of morale, of production, of combating the fifth column, are essentials for victory. These too are fronts. The task of allocating men to the fronts for which they are best fitted is a tremendous responsibility and most draft boards are well aware of it.

Hence we join those who believe that Draft Board 44 was less than wise in taking this man of forty-one away from the post he has guarded so well. Though we have regretted his occasional Red-baiting and his failure to crusade for a second front, that essential toward victory, we feel his contribution toward the war effort could well be emulated by many others in his field. And we believe his draft board should take full cognizance of the warning expressed by the New York *Herald Tribune* that "There is a hint of suppression in the proceedings. . . ." The manner in which Col. (Blimp) McCormick and his like have leaped feet-first into the controversy should put all patriots on guard. Does Colonel McCormick's joy arise from the fact that the army has been increased by one more private—or does it grow from the fact that an able adversary of the defeatists has been removed from his editorial post?

Rescue the Seven-Point Program

WE WONDER how the boys who are fighting and dying around Voronezh and Boguchar would feel if they could read certain newspaper headlines and certain pages of the *Congressional Record.* We wonder how much strength they could draw from the knowledge that after debating a new tax program for nearly five months, the House Ways and Means Committee has finally hatched a bill that is $2,500,000,000 shy of what's needed. And with Nazi tanks plunging towards them, how comforting it would be to the Russian soldiers to learn that sabotage of President Roosevelt's seven-point economic program is considered in certain quarters part of the American way of life—which they are dying to defend together with their own country and their own socialist life.

Last week we talked about the fact that we are not yet waging all-out war against the Axis. We cited the failure to lower the draft age to include the eighteen- and nineteen-year-olds who can be of inestimable value in helping open a Western Front in Europe and reinforcing other fronts. What has been happening to the tax bill and the President's economic program are other cases in point. They are chapters in the same tragic story of "too little and too late," of business- and politics-as-usual that has characterized the war effort of the western powers and been responsible for so many military disasters.

Economic measures are weapons of war without which we cannot have guns, tanks and planes in the right quantities at the right places at the right time. The President's seven-point program is an indispensable part of the machinery for waging total war. Without it, make no mistake about it, we are not pulling our weight in the fight which is determining *our* future and our children's. In presenting his program the President said that only two of the seven points require legislative action: point one requesting heavy taxation, and point four calling for the stabilization of farm prices at parity.

The tax bill, as finally reported by the House Ways and Means Committee, is somewhat improved over the tentative version issued a few days earlier, but is still far from the win-the-war tax program that the Treasury and the President urged. Not only does it fall far short of the goal, but it distributes the tax burden inequitably, which won't help national morale. The lowering of exemptions to include single persons earning as little as eleven dollars a week and the disproportionately heavy taxes on the lower brackets—a single person getting sixteen dollars a week will have to pay over 1,600 percent more than before—violate Mr. Roosevelt's "equality of sacrifice" principle. Instead of raising the normal and surtax rates on corporations to fifty-five percent, as the Treasury asked, the committee set them at forty-five percent. Instead of a 100 percent excess-profits tax, as clearly indicated in the President's message outlining his economic program, an 87½ percent tax has been adopted, and this is calculated in a way that permits many of the biggest profit-makers to escape with a very light tax. The Ways and Means Committee rejected the $25,000 limit on individual incomes and the taxation of state and local bonds requested by the President, rejected the increases in gift and estate taxes proposed by the Treasury. After toying with the idea of a sales tax, the committee, with a weather eye on the elections, dropped it, but there is no guarantee that the defeatists and divisionists in Congress won't try to wangle it through.

The depredations of the farm bloc, who continue to block all attempts to stabilize farm prices at parity, have been discussed in such detail in Bruce Minton's article in our June 30 issue that nothing further need be added except to emphasize that the biggest hole in the price ceilings, threatening to bring down the whole structure, is the uncontrolled prices of agricultural products. But the lose-the-war clique in Congress is evidently not content with this. By cutting the funds requested by the Office of Price Administration and by imposing crippling restrictions on the enforcement of the Price Control Act, this wilful minority is attempting to nullify the act itself. Every housewife knows what this would mean.

The CIO has issued a statement denouncing the saboteurs of the seven-point program and calling for a united effort to save it. This is patriotism of the first order. Those who fiddle while our allies burn are feeding the flames that leap toward our own land. The plain people of America can put the fear of God into these wreckers by speaking up now. And let us make certain to bring them to judgment on election day.

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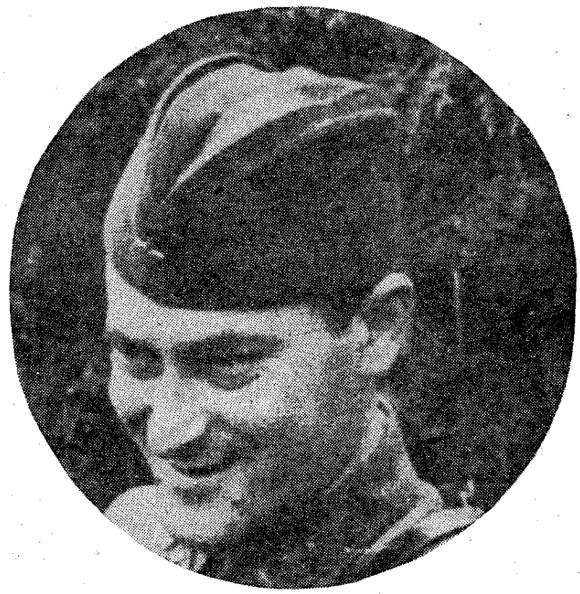
PETROV'S LAST REPORT



His unfinished story of Sevastopol, where he was killed. The ship which brought him there ran the gauntlet of the Heinkels. "One bomb every four minutes. . . ."

A few days before his premature death, Eugene Petrov went to Sevastopol aboard the destroyer Tashkent, *which broke through the ring of enemy blockade and reached the besieged city. On his return ashore on board the same ship Petrov began a story about this expedition. Death at his post interrupted this work, but the manuscript of the unfinished story, which appears below, was brought to Moscow.*

Moscow (by cable).

THE operation carried out by the *Tashkent* will figure in naval textbooks as an example of a daring break-through of a blockade. But not only the textbooks will record it. This operation, associated with the glorious defenders of Sevastopol, will forever live in the memory of people as one of the remarkable examples of military valor, of the grandeur and beauty of the human spirit. The people knew exactly what was in store for them; no one harbored any illusions on that score. The *Tashkent* was to break through the German blockade to Sevastopol, unload ammunition, and after taking aboard women, children, and wounded men, once more break through the blockade and return to its base.

At 2 PM, June 26, a narrow, long, pale blue ship left the harbor. The weather was murderous—a clear sky and scorching sun dominated half the world. Worse weather for running a blockade can hardly be conceived. "They will attack from the sunny side," I heard someone remark on the captain's bridge. Nevertheless, for a long time quiet prevailed and nothing disturbed the dazzling azure calm sea and sky. The *Tashkent* presented a rather odd appearance. Had seaman been told a year ago that they would have to undertake such a cruise they would no doubt have been greatly amazed. Decks and passageways were filled with cases and sacks as if it were not the destroyer *Tashkent,* the best-looking, fastest ship of the Black Sea fleet, but some heavily puffing freighter. Passengers were lying or seated on every side. Passengers aboard a warship! Can there be a queerer sight than this? But people long ago stopped wondering at the peculiarities of the Black Sea war. They knew that crates and sacks were needed by the defenders of Sevastopol, while the passengers were Red Army men sent to relieve the situation if only slightly.

A gunner of the Soviet Black Sea fleet, one of Eugene Petrov's heroes.

Meanwhile, Red Army men on the decks proceeded to make independent arrangements. After a consultation the commander and battalion commissar issued orders, and the Siberian Red Army men, who were on the sea for the first time in their lives, dragged heavy machine guns to bow and aft, and placed light machine guns along the starboard side. Then they settled down comfortably, able to fire in all directions. On boarding the ship they had immediately begun to regard it as territory held by them, while the sea was regarded as enemy-occupied territory. So, in accordance with the rules of warfare, they proceeded to organize an all-around defense. The seamen were pleased. "Look at the eagles we are taking ashore!" they exclaimed. Friendly relations were established at once between the sailors and the Red Army men.

At four o'clock the alert sounded. A German scouting plane appeared in the sky. Anti-aircraft guns opened fire and the scout vanished. Hundreds of eyes, aided by binoculars and range-finders, searched the skies and sea. Meanwhile the ship sailed full steam ahead in the prevailing quiet before the inevitable battle. That battle began an hour later.

WE EXPECTED attacks by torpedo carriers, but long-range Heinkel bombers appeared instead. Thirteen of them swooped down on the ship from the sunny side, one after another. They dropped heavy bombs. (It seemed to me they dropped their load rather slowly.) Now the success of the expedition and fate of the ship and people aboard depended on one man: Capt. Vasili Yaroshenko, commander of the *Tashkent,* a man of medium height with broad shoulders, swarthy complexion, and coal-black mustache. Captain Yaroshenko never left the bridge. Quick but not fidgety, he crossed from the right section of the bridge to the left, squinting to look up, and suddenly, in a fraction of a second, came to a decision. "Left to starboard!" he cried in a hoarse, broken voice.

As soon as the battle began, the helmsman carried out his duties with particular flourish. He swiftly turned the rudder and the ship, its whole bulk shaking, turned aside. A whirlpool of water and splinters rose to the right and left, in front and

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behind us. "Explosion left of starboard," the signalman reported. "Good," the commander replied. The battle lasted three hours with hardly a moment's respite. While some Heinkels took turns dropping their loads on the ship, others flew back to bring more bombs. We longed for darkness as a traveler in the desert yearns for a drop of water. Yaroshenko kept pacing the bridge from left to right and again to left, his squinting eye turned skyward. Hundreds of eyes followed him—he seemed to them as omnipotent as God. Once as he passed me in the interim between two bombs, he winked. "Don't worry! I will cheat them just the same," he said, grinning.

In all, the Germans dropped forty large bombs, approximately one bomb every four minutes. They aimed very accurately, for at least ten bombs hit the place where we would have been had not Yaroshenko ordered us to turn aside at the proper time. The last bomb dropped far to the left, when dusk fell and the moon rose. Ten or fifteen minutes earlier we had seen with pleasure how a Heinkel, enveloped in a cloud of smoke, had crashed downward, disappearing in the sea with the rays of the setting sun.

The bombing was over, but the tension wasn't. We were approaching Sevastopol. It was night and the sky was illuminated by a full moon; the outlines of our ship were clearly discernible in moonlight. When the ship was approximately around Balaklava Traverse, the signalman cried "Torpedo cutters right of starboard!" The guns opened fire. The maneuvering was rendered all the more difficult because the torpedo was hard to spot and evade in the darkness. We waited, but there was no explosion. Apparently the torpedoes missed. The ship continued full steam ahead. The cutters were no longer in sight; they had probably lagged behind. Finally, by the pale light of the moon we beheld a strip of rocky soil. I knew that that Sevastopol sector of the front was very small, but my heart shrank when I beheld it from the sea. It seemed very tiny, with tiny constant flashes of gunfire tracing its outlines. A flaming arc could be seen in the flash of gunfire. Searchlight constantly scanned the skies and tracer bullets slowly wound their way upward. When we dropped anchor and the engines' throb died down we could hear the almost uninterrupted roar of cannon.

THE commander didn't leave the bridge because the battle was actually continued. This was merely a new stage of it. It was necessary to enter and drop anchor in a place which no one before would dare enter with a ship like the *Tashkent* and where not a single captain in the world would dare moor his ship. It was necessary to unload the cargo and disembark people. It was further necessary to take aboard the wounded and evacuated women and children. And all this had to be done with such speed as to be able to start again while it was still dark. The commander knew that the Germans would be waiting for the ship in the morning, that planes were getting ready for attack. It would not be so bad if the Heinkels came. But suppose they were dive bombers? The commander knew that no matter what route he took on the return trip, he would be spotted. There was no avoiding the encounter and the Germans would do everything to destroy the ship on its return trip.

I saw the commander standing on the bridge, watching the progress of the disembarkation and unloading. What were his thoughts as he watched the lightly wounded helping each other up to the ship, the seriously wounded carried up on stretchers, mothers with sleeping babies pressed to their breasts? Quiet prevailed while this went on; people spoke in whispers. The ship was unloaded and loaded in two hours. Two thousand persons embarked and everyone boarding the ship raised his eyes, looking for the captain's bridge and the commander.

Yaroshenko knew well what destruction of a ship at sea meant. Some time ago he was in command of a small ship which was sunk by an enemy bomb. Yaroshenko fought for his ship to the end but couldn't save it. Moreover, he was seriously wounded. He saved the crew but there were no passengers at that time. He was last to remain, and jumped into the sea just as the bridge began to submerge. Gripping his Party membership card in one hand and his revolver in the other, he decided that he would shoot himself if he felt his strength waning and himself drowning. He was saved. But what was to be done now—now that he had passengers—women, children, and wounded? He would have to save the ship or sink with it.

The ship left Sevastopol around two o'clock. . . .

EUGENE PETROV.

An article on Petrov and his work appears on page 22.

This is the kind of ship the "Tashkent" was. Indomitably, the Soviet navy carries on to avenge the Sevastopol defeat

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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF EUGENE PETROV

Why the Soviet people loved the writer who died at his post in battle. His trip to America and visit to the town of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. The satirist and journalist. "A fine writer and a great man."

"IN EUGENE PETROV we lost a fine writer and a great man.

"He wanted a better life; he wanted to make life easier for humanity. It would seem that such a man was not born to die. It would seem that he was born for happiness.

"He died at his fighting post. He died because he loved life: because he loved his friends, because he loved his country."

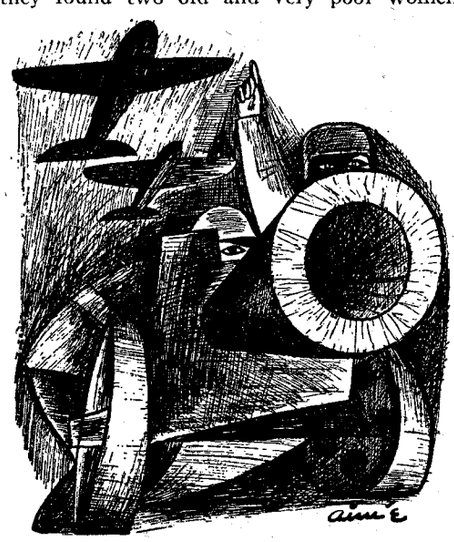
And what can we add to these simple words of his friend and fellow-writer Ilya Ehrenbourg? Our grief is in these words, our enduring respect and devotion. These were the words we felt but could not utter when we learned that Eugene Petrov had been killed fighting by the side of his heroic comrades at Sevastopol.

For we in America have always felt especially close to Petrov. Together with his brilliant collaborator, Ilya Ilf, he came to be known as the Soviet Mark Twain, and the two books by which we know him best give substance to the comparison. In *The Little Golden Calf* and later in *Little Golden America,* Petrov and Ilf combined a brilliant sense of humor with a basically serious intention. In the great satirical tradition of Swift and Saltykov, Voltaire and Mark Twain, they were the relentless foe of the hypocrite, the fool, and the petty bureaucrat. If their weapon was laughter, their purpose was to win the day for sanity. Infused with the spirit of socialism, they ridiculed into agonized discomfort any individual or institution that impeded human progress. To read their books is to be exhilarated by a triumphant common sense.

THAT inspired schemer, Ostap Ibragimovich Bender, commander of the Antelopians in *The Little Golden Calf,* is one of the great characters in satirical literature. The building of socialism, he complains, bores him, and he dreams of Rio de Janeiro with its "One and a half million people and all of them to a man in white trousers." If only he can find a millionaire to relieve of his riches! But at the end of his picaresque adventures, crawling back to the Soviet shore, bareheaded and with one boot, addressing no one, he exclaims: "No ovations are necessary. I did not become a Count of Monte Cristo. I shall have to qualify as a janitor." This artist of knavery in quest of an underground millionaire admits that he is no cherub and has no wings, and his chronicle leaves no doubt concerning the validity of his admission. Nor does it leave any doubt that in the process of growth, Soviet society developed its parasites and pretenders whom Ilf and Petrov helped expose with their astringent mockery.

After their visit to the United States in 1935, these authors held up the mirror to us in a delightful survey which was at once penetrating in its frankness and sympathetic in its understanding. *One-Storied America* was the Russian title of *Little Golden America,* for the writers saw beyond the skyscrapers to the plain communities of our land. They liked us. Traveling around the country in their Ford, they saw us at work in Chicago and Santa Fe, at Boulder Dam and in the southern states. Their chapter on Negroes shows a magnificent insight into the stupidities and horrors of oppression and discrimination: "Oh, if only the southern gentleman, the kindhearted spectator or the participant of a lynching-bee, suddenly understood that in order to attain full 100 percent humanity he needs what he lacks—namely, these very Negro characteristics he derides! What would he say to that?" Always, as in this section, the writers distinguish between the smaller group of evil forces in the country and the splendid qualities of our people as a whole. And yet, because they saw the country at a particularly bleak moment, before the great stride forward in the labor movement, before the nation attained a strong anti-fascist consciousness, their picture shows us how far we have traveled since the depth of the depression.

As one would expect, they visited Hannibal, the city of Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn. With charming matter-of-factness they reported that Americans do not say *Tven* but *Twain,* not *Tohm* but *Tom* Sawyer. In the writer's house they found two old and very poor women, distant kin of the Clemens family, who showed them the chair in which Aunt Polly sat and the window through which the cat Peter jumped after Tom gave him castor oil. Then Petrov and Ilf bought half-dollar photographs on the income from which the two old ladies existed. "In the room nearest to the exit," they noted, "hung a memorial tablet with the image of the writer and an ideologically correct inscription composed by the local banker, a disinterested admirer of Mark Twain: 'The life of Mark Twain teaches us that poverty is a stimulus rather than a deterrent.'" "However," they add with a Twain twist, "the appearance of the impoverished and forgotten old ladies eloquently refuted this stout philosophic concept."



Those of us who did not meet Ilf or Petrov remember them through passages like this, where they reveal a healthy curiosity about people, an honest realism which is always sharp and shrewd without becoming cynical. With the untimely death of Ilya Ilf in 1937, Petrov confined himself largely to editing and reporting. A part of him was gone. In their lives and in the character of their collaboration, they illustrate the fruitful, liberated existence of the Soviet citizen. Ilf was born in 1897, Petrov in 1903. They spent their youth in Odessa, though they became acquainted only later in Moscow, in the offices of the *Whistle,* daily organ of the railway workers. Before assuming their tasks as journalists, Ilf had held jobs as a telephone mechanic and as a skilled worker in an aviation factory; Petrov had been an examiner in courts of justice. The one of Jewish descent, the other Russian, they became inseparably associated in the minds of their vast and enthusiastic audience.

INDEED, as one turns back, with a renewed sense of shock, to the death of Petrov, one is above all impressed by the full integration of the artist in Soviet society which his career reflects. Like his older brother, the popular novelist Valentin Kataev, he was ever close to the people, responding to their criticism, echoing their needs. The writer was a soldier, whether he carried arms or acted as frontline correspondent, or both, as so frequently happened. There have been other casualties among Soviet writers. The gifted Alexander Afinogenov was killed. Leonid Leonov, whose novels are well known in this country, has lost one eye. The left hand of the poet Joseph Utkin was shot off. And these casualties as they are reported in the press merely emphasize what we know to be true, that in the fight

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against the Nazi invader the writer has taken a frontline stand.

The story of Eugene Petrov during the first year of war, up to the time of his death as a lieutenant colonel in the Sevastopol siege, remains to be told, and when we have all the facts we shall have a magnificent and inspiring epic of our time. For even with the available fragments, one pieces together a rich story. In the early part of the war, during the trying months when Moscow was imperiled, Petrov participated in the defense of the Soviet capital. Who can forget his cable published in NEW MASSES exactly a year ago this week? In one paragraph he told the story of the war:

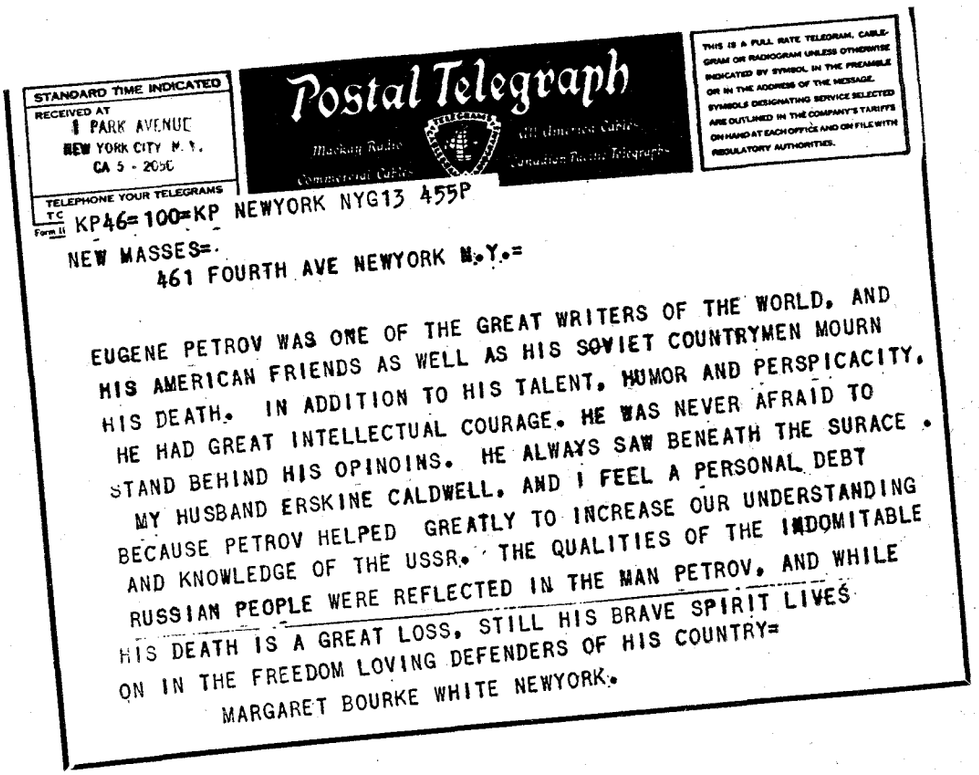
"It would be nonsense to assert that Muscovites are leading a serene, peaceful existence these days, singing gay songs, holding masquerade balls in the Park of Culture and Rest, and exchanging opinions on street corners as to the latest soccer match between the Dynamo and Spartan teams. Peacetime is gone. We are at war. We are engaged in a life and death struggle, a sacred patriotic war in which the whole nation, young and old, is taking part; a war in which each of us takes counsel with his conscience, every day asking himself, 'What have you done for the front today?' Whatever he may be doing—working, riding in the subway, dining, resting—one thought is uppermost in everyone's mind: destroy the enemy."

Destroy the enemy! This was Petrov's passionate cry in everything he wrote about the war. In a cable for the North American Newspaper Alliance last July, he showed us a new type of reporting in which the writer merely records the experience of another person, without embellishment or intrusion. In the words of the old school teacher Andrei Mikhailov, just arrived at Moscow from the front, he gave us one of our earliest insights into the bloody beastliness of the enemy. A few months later we find Petrov with the army on the Central Front, his automobile creeping slowly across a bridge constructed from freshly cut timber, and in a sentence he gives us an unforgettable portrait: "The only living thing among this wreckage and desolation was a single little white chick, who in some mysterious manner escaped from the shells and marching armies and was busily scratching away among the ashes." During these months, Margaret Bourke-White tells us in *Shooting the Russian War,* Petrov was anxious to assume active duty at the front, but he was requested to stay at his desk and take over the editorship of a second publication, *Crocodile,* the humorous weekly.

And then, just two months ago, we find him in Murmansk, from where he sends a cable describing his interview with Clarence McCoy, captain of an American steamer—an interview that reflects the welding of that American-Soviet friendship for which Petrov had always striven. It was at Murmansk that Petrov was asked, as Ilya Ehrenbourg who was present tells us: "Would you like to go to Sevastopol?" "Of course," he said, his face beaming. This was a fortnight before his death. And the story is continued in the last and unfinished dispatch which appears in this issue of NEW MASSES.

As Margaret Bourke-White Remembers Him:

"Talent, humor, perspicacity, great intellectual courage," reflecting the qualities of the indomitable Russian people.



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EUGENE PETROV WAS ONE OF THE GREAT WRITERS OF THE WORLD, AND HIS AMERICAN FRIENDS AS WELL AS HIS SOVIET COUNTRYMEN MOURN HIS DEATH. IN ADDITION TO HIS TALENT, HUMOR AND PERSPICACITY, HE HAD GREAT INTELLECTUAL COURAGE. HE WAS NEVER AFRAID TO STAND BEHIND HIS OPINOINS. HE ALWAYS SAW BENEATH THE SURACE. MY HUSBAND ERSKINE CALDWELL, AND I FEEL A PERSONAL DEBT BECAUSE PETROV HELPED GREATLY TO INCREASE OUR UNDERSTANDING AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE USSR. THE QUALITIES OF THE INDOMITABLE RUSSIAN PEOPLE WERE REFLECTED IN THE MAN PETROV, AND WHILE HIS DEATH IS A GREAT LOSS, STILL HIS BRAVE SPIRIT LIVES ON IN THE FREEDOM LOVING DEFENDERS OF HIS COUNTRY=
MARGARET BOURKE WHITE NEWYORK.

And the grandeur of that fight can only be described in words used by Petrov to describe the feat performed by Red Army Captain Voitsekovsky in an earlier stage of the war:

"So heroic was his feat that ballads will be sung about it for 100 years. He led a reconnaissance battalion and established his observation point in the bell tower of a church in a small, abandoned village.

"The commander and commissar had direct telephone connection with him from their firing station to his roost in the tower. His artillery instructions were splendid. Down below, his battalion was fighting just outside the village. Suddenly a large column of German tanks tore through into the village. The village square was occupied and tanks lined up all around the church.

"The Germans demanded the captain's surrender. He replied by emptying his gun at them. He realized that disaster threatened not only his battalion but all the formations stationed behind the village. Without a moment's hesitation he shouted into the telephone:

"'Fire at me! In the church bell tower. The square is full of German tanks! Farewell, comrades!'

"A storm of artillery fire broke over him. His body was not found."

His body was not found, but such deeds will live in our minds. And not merely as memories, but as unceasing goads to action. The life of Petrov, like the lives of his immortal comrades, will not let us rest. With our deepening love for them we feel an ever deeper hate for the unspeakable monster that is trying to destroy all of us. We experience a new tenderness and at the same time a limitless wrath. And at the same moment that we seek words that will somehow be tinged with the devotion we feel, we resolve to do more than we have to bleed the enemy, to bring the fight to him with the same passion, speed, power that Petrov and his compatriots have shown, unto death. Failing that, we have no right even to enjoy the memory of so beautiful a life as the life of Eugene Petrov.

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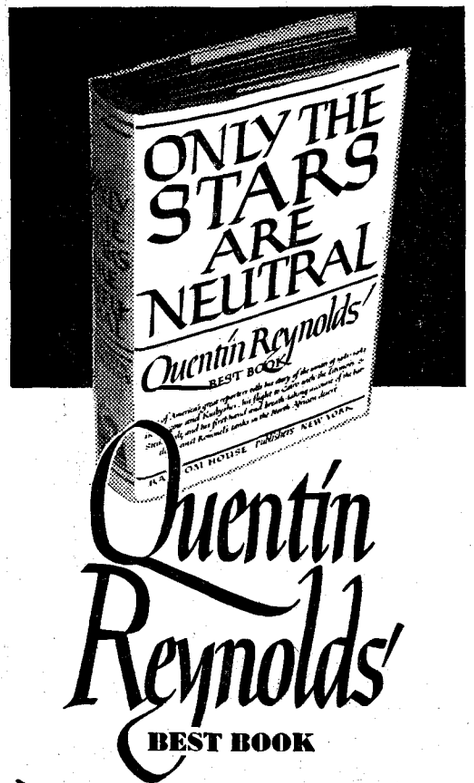

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Rue de la Huchette

THE LAST TIME I SAW PARIS, *by Elliot Paul. Random House. $2.75.*

ALL year round Paris used to be a collection of independent and practically self-sufficient villages. A rich rentier from Auteuil spent his life without ever happening to see Belleville, and a worker from the crooked streets of Menilmontant felt lost in the broad avenues of the Champ-de-Mars. About once in a generation did the barriers disappear, the cobblestones rise in barricades, an angry crowd fill the streets; there were no more villages then, but a city—the Paris of the fall of the Bastille, of the Commune, of the sit-down strikes of 1936.

The Rue de la Huchette, where Elliot Paul spent on and off the eighteen years preceding the war and which he describes in his new book, was located in one of the smaller "villages" of Paris, off Place Saint-Michel, on the outskirts of the Latin Quarter. The section was inhabited by shopkeepers, civil servants, craftsmen, sales clerks, and numerous foreigners. It was typical of Paris, as all other "villages" were, provided one kept in mind that the Rue de la Huchette was but one of some 4,000 streets listed in the city directory.

Elliot Paul, however, saw in the street on which he lived the symbol of France, and in its dwellers a cross-section of the French people. He describes—sometimes movingly and always amusingly, if not deeply—the personal stories, relationships, opinions, and reactions of his friends and neighbors through the eventful years between the two world wars. It is a kind of informal collective autobiography interlined with often inaccurate references to political events.

With a few exceptions, Elliot Paul's neighbors were simple and decent people. They presented the usual assortment of human virtues and weaknesses, and, in addition, some typically French qualities, but they were primarily petty bourgeois.

The French petty bourgeoisie spent the twenty years between Versailles and Munich being forced into the ranks of the working class and futilely resisting the process. Some looked forward to fascism to "save" them; others, more numerous, joined the People's Front. The majority, however, clung to a dying past and comforted themselves with the idea that it was France herself who was dying. "French cooking, like French painting, music and literature," writes Elliot Paul, "was cherished by the monarchy, and adapted itself to the Republic. All these arts, by stagnating and dying after World War I, foretold the fall of France."

Rue de la Huchette was steeped in prejudices and superstitions characteristic of the petty bourgeoisie. Many of its inhabitants believed the lies of their corrupt press. The fascists, for instance, had used the Stavisky Affair to try to kill confidence in democracy among common people, and Elliot Paul writes of "Stavisky, whose name . . . heads the Pantheon of swindlers." The reactionary press specialized in Red-baiting, and the author uncritically echoes this in his utterly fantastic assertions about the French Communist Party.

In all fairness to the Rue de la Huchette, one must remember that it took part in the Sacco-Vanzetti campaign and the sit-down strikes, demanded help for Spain (two of its dwellers fought in the brigades), opposed Munich, and loathed fascism, foreign and domestic. They certainly knew more about French politics and politicians than their American friends; they would never describe—as Elliot Paul did in his book—de la Rocque's Croix de Feu as the youth organization of the Royalist leader Leon Daudet, or substitute President Doumer for President Doumergue. They even might have known that the building of the Soviet exhibit at the Paris World's Fair was topped not "with a rather bad statue holding a star aloof," but with a rather good statue of a young couple holding a sickle and a hammer respectively.

Generally speaking, these people proved much more clear-minded than one would think after reading the few "opinions" quoted above. As a matter of fact, all these opinions are mostly stressed in the course of the book by one inhabitant of Rue de la Huchette—Elliot Paul himself.

One might have expected from the author of *The Life and Death of a Spanish Town* more comprehension and fewer inaccuracies. The defects of his new book stem from a combination of nostalgia for human decency, and political shortsightedness—a combination he shares with many of his petty-bourgeois characters. "If only . . . the Rue de la Huchette . . . could be resurrected," he laments, "there would be enough of France alive today to stir a spark of hope in the hearts of men." One could name hundreds of streets in the working districts of Paris which need not be resurrected because they never ceased to be alive. It is not even certain whether Elliot Paul's Parisian haven is beyond hope. The Rue de la Seine, where another of Doriot's henchmen was executed the other day by a French patriot, lies within easy walking distance of the Rue de la Huchette.

HENRI GIRAUD.

Revolt in Norway

THE EDGE OF DARKNESS, *by William Woods. J. B. Lippincott Co. $2.50.*

THIS story of a Norwegian hamlet's revolt against the Nazis opens seventeen months after Hitler's seizure of Norway. Word comes to the fisherfolk of Trollness that Britain has

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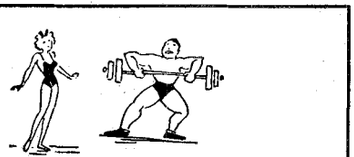

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promised to arm the coastal villages. Which is all that Trollness has been waiting for. There is little shilly-shallying about whether or not to revolt—the Nazis are enemies, and that's that. Resistance has been carried on secretly for some time, under the leadership of a fisherman, a farmer, and a doctor who is also mayor of Trollness. And now: "We fight, Knut," says Dr. Stensgard to the farmer Osterholm. "It will be very dangerous, but at last we fight."

The battle, however, is the last episode in the book. Until then the villagers proceed realistically, planning well ahead, enlisting men and women for particular duties. Then there is a wait for the arms. Meanwhile the Nazis, quartered at the town hotel, stand guard suspiciously, isolated and hostile, without finding out what goes on under the villagers' contemptuous dislike. Not even Johann Stensgard, the doctor-mayor's traitorous son, finds out. For Trollness *organizes* its revolt—soberly, thoroughly, without melodrama or rhetoric. There is real enough drama in the working out of strategy, the excitement and suspense of waiting, and finally the armed conflict.

To be sure, there is drama of a more subjective kind. Mr. Woods attempts to highlight the lives and personalities of his leading characters by revealing their inner conflicts under the impact of mounting crisis and revolt. Gerd, the hotel keeper, must choose between her militant loyalty to Trollness and a brief attraction toward a plump-bellied, lonely Nazi at the hotel. But for tragedy in *fortissimo*, Mr. Woods plays the theme of Karen Stensgard's all-for-love affair with Karl Fischer, a Nazi soldier who wants to get away from it all. It is unfortunate that the author included such episodes. Not only are the situations cliche in themselves, but his handling of them is so routine as to throw a shadow of banality over the rest of the book. The Karen-and-Karl affair, in particular, is dragged out to a point where it exasperatingly slows the narrative. A more interesting theme, the case of Dr. Stensgard, who is an inflexible tyrant in his home and a genuine fighter for democracy outside, is presented too superficially for us to grasp anything but the bare pattern of his behavior.

What the author *can* do with people is a far more difficult thing—to individualize them in the context of collective action. In these sections of the book we get some portraits of real persons. This, with the circumstances of the revolt—especially the swift, blow-by-blow description of the final battle—is what imparts strength and verve to the novel. In the end the people of Trollness are defeated by the Nazi regiment. Many are killed and many escape to the sea in boats. Yet the defeat is temporary, the revolt is only part of a widening revolt. Mr. Woods does not have to labor this point; he has made it well before the final chapter in his very characterization of these people and the nature of their fight.

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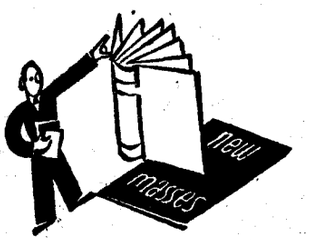

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A Clinical Study

THE COMPANY SHE KEEPS, *by Mary McCarthy. Simon and Schuster. $2.50.*

IN THIS book the author holds up the mirror not to nature but to herself, at such a painful angle that to judge the effect is an embarrassing and empty task. Six disconnected episodes comprise the "novel," but one cannot see any of them for the author or, rather, for the way the author sees the author. How strictly the episodes are autobiographical is of no eventual importance, because they all serve one purpose. They are the pier glass, and into it for two hundred and some pages Miss McCarthy stares with a wild surmise. It is the reader who grows silent. *The Company She Keeps* induces the kind of discomfort that follows an unanticipated social error, a real *faux pas*. If it had to happen, one would rather not have been there.

The six episodes concern a girl in her twenties in New York and, in the nonchronological order of their appearance, her husband, whom she is divorcing; her lover, whom she is relinquishing; a crooked art dealer, who gives her her first job in New York; the man in the Brooks shirt, whom she picks up on the train on the way to Reno; the professional host, who dines her when she is job-scouting and introduces her to "interesting" people; various staff members of a "liberal weekly," including an editor with whom she has an unsatisfactory affair, punctuated with martinis, so-called intellectual confusions, and Trotsky; and, finally, a psychiatrist, who supposedly solves the girl and resolves the story.

Among these, only the art dealer approaches a characterization. Out of key with the rest of the book, the episode in which he appears has a formal unity that suggests that it was dug up from earlier (and less egomaniac) efforts in order to fill in space. Naturally, this is of little help to the book as a whole, but by contrast with the shapeless wandering of the other episodes is something of a relief.

The rest is mere narcissism of a particularly offensive order. Since Lawrence we have had enough self-searching in the shape of fiction to establish an encyclopedia of standards for this particularly twentieth century form of expression. Whether the writing itself is good or bad, one element alone can dignify the self-story. That element is sincerity of purpose, a genuine desire to communicate oneself, and in direct ratio to its existence is such work of value; it is the *sine qua non*. Within a work, it may and usually does fluctuate, but it must drive its way through or writer and work are lost. In *The Company She Keeps* this element does not appear at all except for one brief moment when the heroine seems to ask the psychiatrist with a flash of genuine alarm, "What is wrong with me?"

What is wrong with the heroine is what is wrong with Miss McCarthy as a writer, and the psychiatrist of the story did not pull out the right answer. Miss McCarthy has merely gone to the rather elaborate and meaningless trouble of presenting a personality which is a fabric of fraud, hypocrisy, and falsity. The more stridently it is proclaimed, "*This* is what she (the heroine) is like," the more certain it is that she is not like that at all. What is certain is that always unpleasant and shocking conclusion—that the writer cannot be trusted.

If *The Company She Keeps* has no communicative value as a piece of fiction, it might —in less urgent times—make a useful clinical study. The relationship between extremist narcissism and Trotskyism, for example, could at some later date draw interesting data from the case history outlined in Miss McCarthy's book. But the nonspecialist reader, sobered and intolerant of superficiality, dishonesty, and highly specialized neuroses, will have neither the patience nor the time in this year, this month for *The Company She Keeps*.

HELEN CLARE NELSON.

Brief Review

RETURN TO THE FUTURE, *by Sigrid Undset. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.50.*

Though Sigrid Undset is at present a refugee from Hitler-occupied Norway, history has taught her nothing; she evaluates the events of today about as adequately as a trial-by-fire would render justice in the Supreme Court.

Her hatred of the German people, for whom she recommends a medical board of inquiry, is matched only by her contempt for the Russian people. She reveals herself in a passage of uncontrolled rancor that can be matched only in the literature of fascist propaganda:

"The most miserable poverty, the most unthinkable filth and squalor, the indescribable stench of refuse and decomposition which I saw and smelled everywhere in Soviet Russia are surely the fruit of the acceptance by Russia's revolutionary heroes of a hate-consumed old German Jewish writer named Karl Marx and their identification of their future goals with his dreams of revenge against everything that happened to awake his enmity."

This passage is compounded of the same lies which were used to discredit the Soviet Union in the eyes of the German people, in preparation for the attack of June 22.

The Norwegian people will hardly be grateful to Miss Undset for her sneers at the heroes who are helping to liberate them. Her Jewish readers will doubt the judgment of a writer who sees fit to weight her criticism with racial prejudice. And Americans will wonder how this deep-dyed reactionary came to consider herself a democrat.

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JAZZ AS IT ISN'T

Three movies tried to tell the story of ragtime but missed the up-beat. The lives of Louis Armstrong and Bix Beiderbecke in search of a studio.

DURING the movie season of 1941-42, Hollywood officially acknowledged the existence of its fellow American trademark, jazz. And perhaps typically, not as something filmdom had grown up and collaborated with on many a cinematic adventure, but as something culled from books written in a half-understood tongue.

Warner Brothers dramatized its findings in *Blues in the Night* and depicted jazz as an exacting mistress whom men starve and suffer for—and pursue, inexorably, in boxcars. Paramount, with a shrug of the shoulders, decided that jazz was just the kind of screwy thing that would keep Bing Crosby amused for seven reels of *Birth of the Blues*. RKO evidently had read a deep book on the subject, learned that jazz somehow tied in with Africa, and figured that by showing a couple of natives dancing to the beat of tom-toms, it could claim *Syncopation* as a history of jazz.

However, a few points were agreed upon by the different studios, more or less in common: That white musicians learned to play jazz from Negroes—who then respectfully packed their cornets and vanished into the void. That real jazz could only be played by six-piece outfits—who were always getting shot at by gangsters. That jazzmen who tempt fate by playing with large orchestras that include (God forbid!) violins, soon learn that this leads inevitably to nervous breakdowns. And finally, that jazz would just never have gotten anywhere at all (this conclusion found unanimous agreement) without the help of some nice girl.

Of course, Hollywood has long used snatches of wonderful jazz as background for its hoofers and warblers, and has employed scores of name bands, from Duke Ellington down the scale to Kay Kyser, for its countless night-club scenes. There was even a picture called *The King of Jazz* (meaning Paul Whiteman!) of which not much is remembered except that it was a million-dollar flop. And, averred Hollywood, *that* wasn't going to happen again. This time the casts were peopled with inexpensive bit players (Crosby excepted), and a few six-piece bands were rounded up to supply the jazz for the sound tracks.

Blues in the Night may be disposed of immediately, since the only part of it that truly bore any relationship to jazz was the title song written by Harold Arlen and Johnny Mercer. The failure of the other two pictures is more lamentable because they did make some pretensions toward understanding jazz.

The reason for their failure is obvious; the movie makers buried the subject of their investigations in the stenciled story of Two Boys and a Girl (or Two Girls and a Boy) instead of presenting the drama of jazz itself.

If it was a "period" piece Paramount desired, why did it fail to discover the excitement that attended the emergence of Negro music at the turn of the century and its effect on the music of the period? Ragtime was the result—and ragtime sounded the death-knell for the waltz ballad, changed the dance steps of a nation, took over Tin Pan Alley, and became the popular music of America. At that, Hollywood, with its peculiar standards for measuring success, would probably have concentrated its attention on the fabulous fame achieved by the Original Dixieland Jazz Band; a band of white musicians who transmitted the music of its native New Orleans to the capitals of America and Europe.

THE real story of ragtime goes back to the plantations of the Black Belt where Negroes, without the opportunities for musical instruction or even the acquisition of the white man's cornet, clarinet, and trombone, mastered the foreign instruments by experimentation, diligent practice, and an urge to produce music. They memorized or approximated the quadrilles and marches of their day, invariably *altering* them by obeying their impulses in the matter of time values, rhythms, and tones. This led to the creation of a new kind of music that inspired composers hearing it to evolve what was to become known as "ragtime" and *culminated* in the exploits of the Original Dixieland Jazz Band.

What the producers of both *Birth of the Blues* and *Syncopation* failed to indicate was the *quality* of the music. The ragtime of the early 1900's wasn't the slick, Fifty-Second-Street brand of "New Orleans Jazz" the sound tracks would have us believe. It was brash and rough, but it was aglow with the fire of its youth. When *Syncopation* carried the story of jazz past its "New Orleans" stage, onward to its "Chicago" period and beyond, to the era of "swing," its storytellers completely ignored the many, many innovations that occurred in that span of years and did not even hint at the revolution that took place in the young art form when Louis Armstrong returned to Chicago after an epic-making stay of one year in New York.

If some picture studio were to set an imaginative writer (with a feeling for jazz, of course) on the trail of Armstrong from the day he arrived in New York with a contract in his pocket to join Fletcher Henderson and his eleven-piece orchestra, that writer could weave a wondrous tale. Not that it would be easy, reconstructing and assembling the events and impressions Armstrong experienced during that stay. Previous biographers have muffed its significance, and Armstrong's own book, *Swing That Music,* gives only the slightest clue; but from that visit sprang a musical style so unique, it is conceded to be the greatest single contribution jazz has received thus far.

Consider the facts. Armstrong was only twenty-four years old at the time. True, his talent had already won him respect and admiration, but it was limited to a circle of Negro musicians. As Armstrong puts it: "Out on the South Side, in Chicago, I was beginning to 'feel my oats' and think I was pretty good, more than ever when Fletcher Henderson called me to come to New York . . . but I hadn't counted on New York. In that big town I was just a smalltown boy."

There, in a famous dance hall on Broadway, he sat in for the first time with an orchestra that played its music from scores that had to be followed carefully; and it wasn't only down-home rags and stomps Armstrong was playing this time. On the opposite bandstand sat an orchestra composed of the best-known white musicians in the field playing music that was unfamiliar to him; the musical comedy airs of Kern, Gershwin, Vincent Youmans, and Richard Rodgers. And the town was still buzzing with the success of the *Rhapsody in Blue,* unveiled a scant six months earlier. The social life and the cultural activities of the Negroes of New York also left their impression on the young musician. Nineteen twenty-five was one of the boom years in Negro literature, and as Armstrong observed: "Harlem had the most brilliant and talented artists of our race"—many of whom Armstrong undoubtedly met.

His trumpet playing didn't immediately re-

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flect his experiences but he made a tentative start in New York, feeling his way around as he sat in with a small combination Clarence Williams used for accompanying blues singers on records. Softly and 'way in the background, closing up the spaces between the singer's phrases, he essayed a few experimental fillips. Not too many and not very important ones, but it was a prophecy of something to come. It was when he got back to Chicago and the old five-piece band he knew so well that he began to create the most amazing jazz of his time. If Hollywood were to give us that much, we'd be willing to accept a super-dooper montage climax showing his subsequent successes in America, Europe, and Hollywood itself.

JAZZ has another tense drama to offer. This, a more somber one, is the life story of Bix Beiderbecke, whose luminous career was snuffed out in death at the shockingly young age of thirty-two. Beiderbecke blazed a trail with his horn, a trail that led from Dixieland to Debussy, to something so very much his own it was to become known as "Bixology." And in spite of its abbreviation the story of his life contains all the elements of a Hollywood thriller.

The story in fictionalized form has already been told and is ready for the cameras (*Young Man With a Horn* even has a girl in it), but we want to issue fair warning: the girl is not a nice girl, the young man has won fame *before* she appears, and the part of the book in which she appears is the only part of the book that stinks. The rest of it, devoted to jazz, is honest and good. This boy too learns to play jazz from Negroes, but they don't vanish. On the contrary, they remain close friends throughout his short life and are present at his death. It is the Negroes who get the young man his first break in the music business by recommending him to a leading white orchestra leader, and they play together frequently in jam sessions. In fact, the one desire that motivates him before he passes on is to form a mixed band.

There it is, Hollywood, waiting for you. Only remember one thing: the memory of Bix Beiderbecke is loved and revered wherever jazzmen gather. Go easy.

ELLIOTT GRENNARD.

A Squint at History

Lowell Thomas' commentary doesn't help "United We Stand."

"UNITED WE STAND" is a gallant title, but not even Lowell Thomas' commentary can bind together the oddly assorted Fox Movietone newsreel shots which make up this film. It needs more than the Camera Eye to give meaning to the thousands of events which led up to the present struggle. Mr. Thomas' ringing voice rarely supplies the required understanding.

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ceremonies and the bombings, the meetings and the killings. Everything—but too little of anything. The "world in terms of personalities" flashes swiftly and disconnectedly before one's eyes, a world in which the slaughter at Shanghai and the rock from which a king fell while mountain-climbing are equally dramatic and significant. Nothing is explained. Almost up to the end Hitler and Mussolini, the long Chamberlain and the short king of Italy appear, perform, vanish, and reappear like old style comic villains. The Prime Minister, back from Munich, waves the white paper of his betrayal at the camera, but there is neither sight nor sound of the millions who cursed him on that terrible day. A scene in search of a history.

In addition, Mr. Thomas is determined to own up to his past mistakes—by repeating them. If the Spanish civil war was nothing to him in 1936-39 but a struggle between "conservatives" and "left-wing radicals, aided by Soviet Russia," he is not the man to change his mind, though he may admit a moment later that the fall of the Spanish republic was "an Axis victory and a democratic defeat." When Bonnet sells the French people to Ribbentrop, Mr. Thomas has nothing to say; but he is quite a philosopher when he chides the French people for having "grown soft, yearning only for peace." Again we have, not history, but the chronology of Mr. Thomas' painful failure to comprehend it.

Only when the film moves from the "personalities" to the bombed cities, the graveyard harbors, and the women, children, and blind men on roads that lead nowhere, does it begin to hit between the eyes. Then one watches the wheel come full circle: it turns from the suffering of the people to their action, from their isolation to their unity, from Versailles and Munich to Washington, London, and Moscow, where the great pacts for victory are signed. For a few minutes the actual human world fighting for its freedom replaces the unreal palaces and processions. It even takes hold of Mr. Thomas' mind and gets him to say what the war is about.

IN an introduction to *Eagle Squadron,* Quentin Reynolds delivers a sober tribute to the Americans who have been flying and fighting with the RAF. The picture itself is something less of a tribute. It seems to have been produced under the assumption that audiences are not interested in a hero unless he is also a fool. The central character of *Eagle Squadron,* Chuck Brewer, played by Robert Stack, is therefore given the difficult assignment of being both. Not only does he shoot down enemy planes, take part in a Commando raid, and steal a Nazi plane which possesses a new plane spotting device, but he must sulk like Achilles, dramatically misunderstand his British comrades' concealing their emotions, assume proprietary rights over the first girl he meets (an earl's daughter, by mere chance) and threaten to punch the squadron commander in a fit of unjustified jealousy. It is not made clear how intelligent adult bravery

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mixes so smoothly with adolescent hysterics, but the unfortunate combination has become a fixture in second rate pictures and will have to be taken for granted here too.

As might be guessed, the most moving scenes are those in which our young hero's pre-marital troubles play a secondary part. There is one in which a young Polish American, whose family has been killed in Warsaw, is asked by the lieutenant what he wants to do. "All I want is to kill Nazis," he says. A group of children hide under their picnic truck, which is being strafed by planes, and sing the old folk song, *John Peel,* to keep from crying. A file of blind men call faintly for help on the burning stairway of a hospital. And finally there are good dispatch, flight and combat scenes, with an ending borrowed from the Soviet film *Frontier.* None of these matches the episodes of *Target for Tonight,* however. They are all insufficiently developed, as though Producer Walter Wanger, having bought a "story," felt himself under the unhappy obligation of using it and throwing in the war for good measure. But he did not buy the right kind of story. He got a knee pants yarn for a full-sized war.

DO YOU remember how Black Beauty felt when he saw his old friend Ginger in the street one day gasping and floundering as she tried to pull a huge overloaded cart? This is how you feel while Henry Fonda drags along one of the creakiest comedies of the season, with Don Ameche and Lynn Bari sitting stonily on top. It was not *so* long ago that Mr. Fonda played Young Mr. Lincoln and Tom Joad. He isn't ready for the bull ring yet. But *The Magnificent Dope* is one.

Don Ameche is head of a Success Institute which is on its last legs for lack of customers. Edward Everett Horton is his assistant. Lynn Bari is his girl. They need publicity. So they run a letter writing contest to discover the biggest failure in the country. Prize $500, plus a course in success. Guess who wins. Henry Fonda! He's from Vermont, wears his hat way on top of his head, and doesn't believe in success, but wants the money to buy his home town a fire engine. Well, I'll be darned. So Lynn Bari has to persuade him to take the course for Don Ameche's sake, and Henry falls in love with Lynn and teaches *her* how to relax, Ha, Ha, Ha, by rotating her head while he looks like a watchspring just before it snaps. And Lynn doesn't know he loves her, or that she loves him, until it's too late. For Don plays Henry a dirty trick, and Henry thinks Lynn was in on it, but then he finds out she wasn't, and it's not too late after all. And so Don is left behind, Ha, Ha, Ha, with Edward Everett Horton, and Henry drives off with Lynn on his fire engine, and Lynn goes with him because he's promised her to lay off being lazy long enough to work hard for her all the rest of his life.

Whatever its outcome, this farce would be a distinct victory for the system of progressive relaxation.

CHARLES HUMBOLDT.

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Hilltop Revue

IF ANY one characteristic marks the thousands of young people acting and singing around the vacation circuit, it's an enormous capacity for work. At Hilltop (Hopewell Junction, N. Y.) for instance, on the July 4 weekend, some dozen theatrical hopefuls prepared a concert, a three-act play and a revue, all full length, in less than two weeks. It is to be expected that the final result would suffer somewhat from a lack of polish, and the revue—with which this column is concerned—was somewhat bumpy. But nobody seemed to care. What it lacked in finesse, the show made up in bravura, in energy, in bounce, and friendliness.

Not all the material was new, but it was pertinent. Martin Dies, Hitler, the Cliveden set, isolationists, and saboteurs all come in for their proper share of vitriol. One of the best numbers of the evening was a hilarious satire on Saroyan, called "My Heart Is in the Barroom." The playwright is treated roughly in a noisy scene during which all the stock characters are clowned to death. A grimly eloquent touch was Ruth Bluestone's dancing in "Strange Fruit." The dancer, with a fine economy of movement, portrayed the horrible suffering of the Negro lynch victim. The revue finale was *Ballad for Americans*, sung by an admixture of guests and performers.

I have seen a great many resort revues, all varying in the quality of their work, but I never cease to wonder at a certain magic that seems to be at work in all these places. In less than three hours (there was a call for volunteers during the same afternoon of the day in which the revue was given), a chorus consisting of two trained singers, and twenty willing workers, including the bell boy, the scenic designer, the piano player, and a belated guest looking for a seat, was able to present a performance of the *Ballad* that was disciplined, spirited, and amazingly well sung and staged.

But as important as the material are the people who make up the staff. These small hardworking resort groups constitute the talent spate that contributes to the mainstream of the metropolitan theater. They make up the American Youth Theaters that very often embody the most progressive elements of the theater. The company at Hilltop is as talented as any. They have two pleasing singers in Catherine Aspinall and Brooks Dunbar, an imaginative and well equipped dancer in Ruth Bluestone, a competent comic in Robert Alvin. The balance of the company consists of Dick Briggs, Margaret Thompson, Mary James (a young actress with lots of promise), James Karen, Ruth Alvin, and Julius Bell. The entire direction is in the hands of Charles Dubin, who not only directs, but acts, sings, and serves as official Emcee. Many of these kids are newcomers to the revue stage, but I wouldn't be at all surprised to see a number of them pop up again in the fall.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

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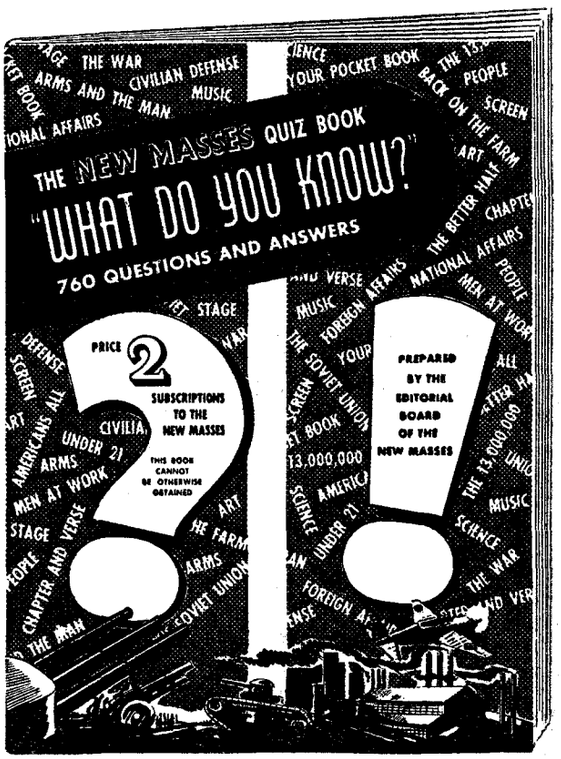
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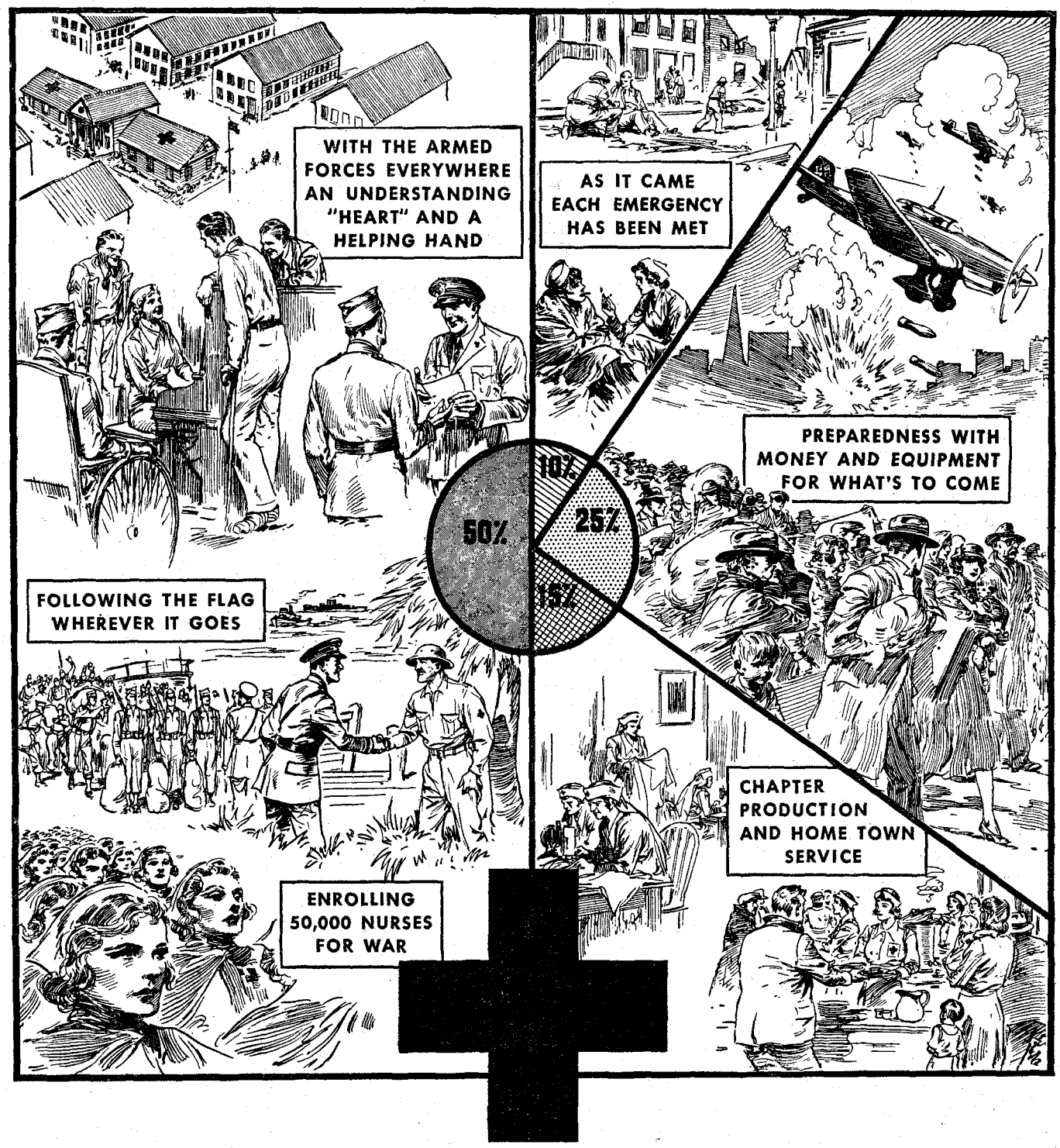
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